NATION

Pollution boards can impose fines, rules apex court

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BUSINESS

Mkts close lower ahead of RBI policy decision

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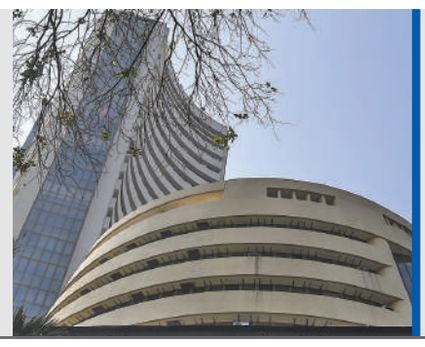

SPORTS

'Stars unlikely to pick & choose games'

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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Now, Shah is India's longest serving HM

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

From the abrogation of Article 370 to completely overhauling criminal laws, from setting a March 2026 deadline to eliminate the Naxal menace to ensuring the surrender of 10,000 militants in the Northeast, Amit Shah has achieved several milestones in his over six-year tenure as the Union Home Minister, the longest in history. Known as the second most influential figure in the country after PM Narendra Modi, Shah has completed 2,258 days in office, surpassing LK Advani's record. His tenure has been marked by several historic decisions, including piloting three criminal laws replacing the colonial era laws. *—PTI*

Parliament extends President's Rule in Manipur

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The Parliament has approved a six-month extension of President's Rule in Manipur beyond 13 August. The resolution, earlier passed by the Lok Sabha, was ratified by the Rajya Sabha despite Opposition protests over electoral roll revisions in Bihar. Deputy Chairman Harivansh called it a "constitutional obligation" to pass the resolution. Opposition MPs protested against the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls, with BJD MP Muzibulla Khan criticising the repeated imposition of President's Rule. Minister of State Nityanand Rai stated that a court order had caused a rift between communities. *—PTI*

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NCERT books show Jaisalmer as part of Maratha empire

JAISALMER, 5 AUG

Chaitanya Raj Singh, from Jaisalmer's former royal family, has criticised a map in the NCERT Class 8 social science textbook that inaccurately shows the city as part of the Maratha Empire. Calling the depiction "historically misleading and factually incorrect," Singh said it disrespects the legacy and sovereignty of his ancestors. He urged Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and NCERT to correct the error, calling it "agenda-driven" and damaging to regional pride. He said that no credible historical source mentions Maratha control over Jaisalmer. The issue goes beyond a textbook mistake, he said, questioning the NCERT's credibility. *—PTI*

Bangladesh to hold election in Feb next year: Yunus

DHAKA, 5 AUG

Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus on Tuesday announced that the next Parliamentary election will be held in February next year. Yunus made the comments during a televised address to the nation on the first anniversary of last year's student-led protest movement, dubbed the "July Uprising", that toppled longtime prime minister Sheikh Hasina. "I will send a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner requesting that the Election Commission hold the national election in February 2026, before the upcoming Ramzan," Yunus said while addressing the nation. Earlier, general elections in Bangladesh were scheduled for the first half of April next year. *—PTI*

Cloudburst horror hits Uttarakhand

Many missing as houses fall like pack of cards

UTTARKASHI, 5 AUG

Disaster swept through the Himalayan village of Dharali in Uttarakhand with a massive cloudburst leading to flashfloods that barrelled through homes, trees and cars, trapping at least 60-70 people and leaving at least four dead.

Dharali is the main stopover on way to Gangotri, the origin of the Ganges, and home to many hotels, restaurants and home stays.

At least half the village was buried under the fast-flowing mudslide of slush, rubble and water, officials said on Tuesday, as rescue personnel battled the elements in the ecologically fragile heights to contain the damage.

Contiguous buildings, including three and four-storey houses, fell like a pack of cards as the surging waters washed over them. Officials said that at least 40-50 buildings were washed away.

The devastating flashflood came after a cloudburst somewhere in the catchment area of the Kheer Ganga river.

The raging waters flowed down two different sides of the same hill, one towards Dharali and the other towards the village of Sukk.

There was no official confirmation on the number of people who went missing after the flashflood but it is likely to be high as the sudden rush of floodwaters gave people no time to run towards safety.

An Army team was immediately rushed to the spot to launch rescue operations. However, the floods then hit an Army camp, sweeping away at least 10 personnel, according to early reports.

Locals said a large portion of the Dharali market was washed away.

Landslides also blocked 163 roads, including five national highways, seven state highways and two border roads, further impeding rescue and preventing personnel from getting to the far-flung area, about 140km from the state capital Dehradun.

No stone is being left unturned in providing assistance to the people, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on X. *—PTI*

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Houses swept away in a cloudburst triggered flash flood at Dharali, in Uttarkashi district, Uttarakhand, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Karnataka transport unions suspend strike after HC rap

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

The Karnataka High Court on Tuesday came down heavily on the transport strike despite its interim order and warned of contempt proceedings, after which the KSRTC Staff and Workers' Federation announced suspension of the agitation till 7 August, when the matter will be heard next.

Passengers were left in the lurch with most busses not functioning.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Joshi expressed strong displeasure over the strike being carried out despite the invocation of the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) and the court's direction not to proceed with the agitation.

The court extended its earlier interim order restraining the strike by two more days and directed the unions to submit an affidavit on Wednesday confirming that the strike has been called off.

KSRTC Staff and Workers' Federation president HV Anantha Subbarao told reporters in City that the agitation had been suspended till 7 August and employees had been instructed to return to work with immediate effect.

The court observed that if there are issues then they should be resolved through talks with the government. It also noted that resorting to a strike even after ESMA had been enforced was unlawful. The court also issued notices to the unions of all four State transport corporations.

The KSRTC bus stand at Majestic in Bengaluru on Tuesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD**

STRIKES CAUSE MAJOR DISRUPTIONS

The Tuesday strikes crippled public bus services across the State.

The unions had gone ahead with the strike despite a court stay, pressing demands including payment of 38 months' salary arrears and a wage revision effective 1 January, 2024.

Buses remained parked at depots and only a few were seen running, as some staff chose not to participate in the strike.

Bus stands in major cities like Bengaluru, Chikkamagaluru, Raichur, Chitradurga, Hubballi, Dharwad, Belagavi, Mangaluru, Mysuru, Tumakuru, Hassan, Madikeri, Shivamogga, and Kalaburagi saw heavy passenger rush, with thousands stranded and struggling to find alternate ways to reach their destinations.

Passengers reported waiting for hours, with private busses packed across the State.

"We have our reservations already... No official here is properly responding," a passenger said. "They are not even telling us if our bus has been cancelled. We have no clarity... I cannot even look for a flight or train at the last moment. Even the private buses are all full. I am unable to do anything. It's a mess." *—PTI*

>>>Continued on Page 2

Trump: Will raise India tariffs substantially in next 24 hours

NEW YORK/MOSCOW, 5 AUG

US President Donald Trump announced that he will raise the tariffs on New Delhi "very substantially" over the next 24 hours because it is buying Russian oil.

"With India, what people don't like to say about India, they're the highest tariff nation. They have the highest tariff of anybody. We do very, very little business with India because their tariffs are so high," Trump said on Tuesday in an interview with CNBC Squawk Box.

"India has not been a good trading partner, because they do a lot of business with us, but we don't do business with them. So we settled on 25 per cent (tariff), but I think I'm going to raise that very substantially over the next 24 hours, because they're buying Russian oil. They're fuelling the war machine. And if they're going to do that, then I'm not going to be happy," he added.

When asked about the trade deal with India that seemed imminent, Trump said the "sticking point" with India is that its tariffs are too high.

"Now I will say this, India went from the highest tariffs ever, they will give us zero tariffs....But that's not good enough, because of what they're doing with oil."

RUSSIA BACKS INDIA

Russia said sovereign countries have the right to select their partners in trade and economic cooperation based on their interests.

"We hear many statements that are in fact threats, attempts to force countries to cut trade relations with Russia. We do not consider such statements to be legal," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said.

"We believe that sovereign countries must have and do have the right to choose their trade partners," he added. *—Agencies*

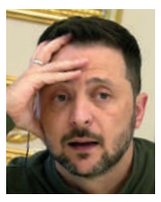
'US wanted India to buy Russian oil'

A video of former US ambassador to India, Eric Garcetti, lauding New Delhi's purchase of Russian oil in 2024 has resurfaced on social media. In the viral video, Garcetti says, "They (India) bought Russian oil because we wanted somebody to buy Russian oil at a price cap. That was not a violation or anything. It was actually the design of the policy because, as a commodity, we didn't want the oil prices going up, and they fulfilled that." The remarks were made during the 2024 conference.

'Russia uses Pak men & Indian tech'

KYIV, 5 AUG

Ukraine has officially brought to the attention of the Indian government and the European Union (EU), the presence of electronic components manufactured or assembled by Indian companies, in Iranian-designed drones used by Russian forces, according to media reports.



Ukraine reportedly formally raised the issue with India's Ministry of External Affairs on at least two occasions after discovering electronic components, designed by Indian firms, were discovered in Iranian-designed Shahed 136 Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) used by Russian forces since 2024.

Ukrainian diplomats also discussed the matter with EU sanctions envoy David O'Sullivan during his visit to New Delhi in mid-July.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that mercenaries from China, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and African countries are fighting alongside Russian forces in the ongoing conflict, as the country continues to grapple with the brutal war that has claimed countless lives and displaced millions.

During a visit to the frontline in the Kharkiv region, Zelenskyy reportedly learnt that Russia foreign mercenaries were on the ground. "We also specifically addressed the issues of drone supply and deployment, recruitment, and direct funding for the brigades". *—Agencies*

AFTER OP SINDOOR

IAF, Navy place mega orders for BrahMos missiles

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Indian armed forces are placing mega orders for the Indo-Russian joint venture BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles. The increase in demand reportedly followed the munition's success during Operation Sindoor.

Top defence sources said that a high-level defence ministry meeting is expected to give clearance to the procurement of a large number of BrahMos missiles for the Indian Navy warships, along with ground and air-launched versions of these weapons for the Indian Air Force soon.

The missiles were used in a big way to hit Pakistani air bases and Army cantonments during the four-day conflict.

The Navy would be using the missiles for equipping its Veer-class warships while the Indian Air Force would be using them to equip its Russian-origin Su-30 MKI fighter jet fleet, the sources said.

This comes as Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Marcos praised India's indigenous defence capabilities, particularly the BrahMos missile project. Philippines is reportedly looking to buy more BrahMos missiles. *—PTI*

INDIA, PHILIPPINES SIGN 9 PACTS, INCLUDING DEFENCE

India and the Philippines are friends by choice and partners by destiny, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said while meeting Philippines President Ferdinand R Marcos Jr. The two countries signed nine pacts, including for a strategic partnership, terms of reference for talks among the armies, and for cooperation on peaceful use of outer space.

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Lalu's son Tej Pratap announces coalition with 5 minor parties

PATNA, 5 AUG

Former Bihar minister Tej Pratap Yadav has announced the formation of a coalition of five minor parties to contest the upcoming assembly elections. The parties are Vikas Vanchit Insaan Party (VVIP), Bhojpuriya Jan Morcha (BJM), Pragatisheel Janta Party (PJP), Wajib Adhikar Party (WAP) and Sanyukt Kisan Vikas Party (SKVP). Yadav, recently expelled from RJD by his father, Lalu Prasad, made the announcement at a press conference attended by the parties' national presidents.

He said he will contest from the Mahua seat, which he represented until 2020 before RJD shifted him to Hasanpur. "People are free to make fun of me, but I will tread my own path. Our coalition will move forward together to ensure social justice, social rights, and the complete transformation of Bihar," he said. *—PTI*

Satyapal Malik, former J&K Guv, dies at 79

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Satyapal Malik **PHOTO: PTI**

Former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satyapal Malik died on Tuesday at a hospital here after a prolonged illness, his personal staff said. He was 79.

Malik, who had also held the positions of governor of Goa, Bihar, Meghalaya, and Odisha, besides being a member of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha in his long political career, died at 1.12 pm at the Ram Manohar Lohia hospital here.

"It is with deep regret that we confirm the demise of Satyapal Malik, who had been receiving intensive care at our facility," the RML authorities said in a statement. He had a longstanding history of diabetic kidney disease, hypertension, and other chronic health issues.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Malik oversaw the Abrogation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of the state into two Union Territories on 5 August, 2019.

PM Narendra Modi and several other political leaders condoled the death of the former Parliamentarian.

"My thoughts are with his family and supporters in this hour of grief. Om Shanti," Modi said on X. *—PTI*

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Sudden bus strike strands commuters state-wide

Thousands wait for hours at bus stops as transport unions demand better pay, protest against privatisation

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

Commuters across State were left stranded as transport workers from all four major road transport corporations launched a state-wide strike on Tuesday to press for their pending demands.

The sudden halt in services has caused severe inconvenience, with visuals from Hosur Regional Bus Terminal showing long queues, confusion, and helpless passengers struggling to find alternative means of travel.

Workers from Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC), North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) and Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KKRTC) joined the strike.

The demands included the release of 38 months of outstanding salaries of transport employees, a wage revision to effective from 1 January, 2024, privatisation and harassment of workers should stop, and drivers from the company should be assigned to electric buses as well.

This comes after talks between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and the unions failed.

"We are here for the last one hour," one passenger said. "We still don't know whether the bus will even come or not... It has caused a lot of inconvenience because it has not been planned well. No other options have been given for all the passengers who had booked tickets well in advance. Even the officials here are clueless."

A view of the BMTC/ KSRTC bus stand at Majestic on Tuesday; A child tries to take a nap at the bus station **PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD**

The State government also deployed police personnel at several bus stands.

As government buses are not operating, the government has decided to allow private buses to be used for public transportation to various destinations, including from City's Majestic terminal.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar appealed to the agitating transport employees to give up their adamant stand and join their duty. He said the State government has not called their demands unjust but the transport unions must understand the government's position.

The Deputy CM appealed to the protesting employees to understand that citizens are important to the government. "Everyone should cooperate. Some drivers and conductors have come for duty, whom I welcome. The livelihood of people is important. There is no meaning in your obduracy. Chief Minister will certainly help you if that can be done. You should not unnecessarily take a stand that disrespects the judiciary," Shivakumar said.

> **CM Siddaramaiah and Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy want to help them. Now they should understand the situation. We have to take care of the citizens. They should not insist for things that are not possible**
>
>
>
> -DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

> **If the Congress leader (Rahul Gandhi's) visit wasn't there, CM Siddaramaiah wouldn't have spoken to the employees. The CM held a meeting with employees (on Monday) carelessly, but has failed to convince them to withdraw the strike**
>
>
>
> -BY Vijayendra, BJP President

Home Minister G Parameshwara said the strike was peaceful. "There are no reports of any (untoward) incidents...There could be some minor incidents but nothing major has happened. Police have made proper arrangements to ensure that peace is maintained".

However, the Opposition flayed the government for not properly addressing the issue.

The BJP questioned about the State's financial position, asking why the government is unable to fulfil the protester's demands.

Opposition leader R Ashoka said the government should have come out with a formula based on what all can be fulfilled among the demands of the employees.

"The government and the Chief Minister should immediately come out of the deep slumber, and from their laziness, call them (employees) and solve the problem immediately. If it is not possible for you, quit and go home. Don't you have sense, people are facing trouble, what are you doing?" he charged.

"The curse of the people will affect you. This government is bankrupt, its coffers are empty. We support the demands of the employees that are legal," he said. *—Agencies*

The strike in numbers

BELAGAVI, 5 AUG

In Belagavi district, at least 90 per cent of busses from Chikkodi and 70 per cent of busses from the Belagavi terminal did not offer any services, according to Belagavi Divisional Controller Rajesh Huddar.

A total 618 buses remained in their depot in Chikkodi district with 2,800 staff participating in the strike.

Busses from Maharashtra were allowed to enter Belagavi district amid tight police security. Maharashtra has operated few buses up to the Karnataka border and the last bus stands on Karnataka border.

The North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC) was hit just as bad. Nearly 80 per cent of the buses from Bagalkot district remained off the road.

According NWKRTC Huballi division's data, Dharwad district operated only 55.16 per cent of the scheduled buses. Hubballi Rural Division was to operate 258 buses, but only 190 were run, while 68 bus services remained cancelled or delayed, marking a departure percentage of 73.64 per cent. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: ANI

City's BEML secures ₹282 crore Army order for HMVs

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

The Bengaluru-based BEML, a public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Defence, has received a Rs 282 crore order from the Indian Army for high mobility vehicles (HMVs) with four-door cabins for tactical logistics. The company stated that this order will significantly bolster indigenous defence manufacturing. The specialised HMVs are designed to transport strategic assets such as battle tanks and engineering equipment, essential for operational readiness. Equipped with custom-built cabins and all-terrain capabilities, the vehicles are suitable for challenging environments, ensuring mission continuity. The BEML HMV PT 8x8, a heavy-duty vehicle, can haul trailers weighing up to 100,000kg and is tailored for difficult terrain applications, the company added. The order marks a major step in strengthening India's defence manufacturing sector. *—PTI*

AI's workforce impact study to be done in a month

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

IT Minister Priyank Kharge said the State is talking to companies to evaluate the impact of AI on workforce and the assessment is expected to be completed in about a month. The comment assumes significance in the backdrop of TCS' decision to slash 12,000 jobs this year. The unexpected move by India's largest IT services company has sent fresh tremors in the tech industry, that has been battling global macroeconomic woes and geopolitical uncertainty. On the Karnataka State IT/ITeS Employees' Union reportedly seeking action against TCS over the job cuts, Kharge said State does not recognise unions in IT sector. He, however, added that "if there are concerns raised by public and people, it is our responsibility to address it". "We are talking to companies to ask them what exactly we can do to ensure our HR or talent is most employable. We are getting a survey done with the companies on AI affect in workforce," Kharge told PTI on sidelines of SAP Labs India event. *—PTI*

Dharmasthala burials: SIT to probe 2nd complainant's claim

DHARMASTHALA, 5 AUG

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) investigating alleged mass burials in Dharmasthala has been handed a new case concerning the mortal remains of a girl, police sources said on Tuesday. A second complainant alleged that police failed to register a case and that the girl's remains were buried without following proper legal procedures.

Following the submission of this report, the case has been brought under the jurisdiction of the SIT, which will oversee all further inquiries. The team has already begun investigations, examining locations mentioned by complainants.

The second complainant, Jayant T, claimed he witnessed an illegal burial of a girl. He initially approached the SIT office in Belthangady to share information before being advised to lodge a formal complaint at Dharmasthala Police Station.

Workers leave the site of an alleged burial related to the Dharmasthala mass burial case at Dharmasthala in Dakshina Kannada district **PHOTO: PTI**

The first complainant, a former sanitation worker whose identity remains undisclosed, stated he was employed in Dharmasthala between 1995 and 2014 and alleged he was forced to bury bodies—including women and minors—some showing signs of sexual assault. He has recorded a statement before a magistrate.

The investigation now covers multiple allegations of procedural lapses and misconduct.

The SIT is inspecting suspected gravesites, gathering physical and testimonial evidence, and conducting forensic examinations. The inquiry is expected to continue over the coming weeks. *—PTI*

'FRAGRANT' TRADITION

The Glass House at Lalbagh getting ready for Independence Day Flower Show in Bengaluru on Tuesday. The Flower Show will be open to the public from 7 to 18 August **PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD**

BJP COMPLAINS OVER TREE FELLING AT FREEDOM PARK FOR RAGA'S PROTEST

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

The State BJP has lodged a complaint with police and authorities over the demolition of a compound and the felling of trees at City's Freedom Park, the venue for Rahul Gandhi's upcoming protest against electoral irregularities. The party has called for legal action against those responsible.

Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, is scheduled to participate in the protest on 8 August, after which a representation will be made to the Election Commission. The BJP's release states, "An old compound of the Freedom Park was demolished for Rahul Gandhi's protest against the Election Commission alleging irregularities in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections."

The party also filed a complaint with the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, accusing officials of illegal tree-cutting, damaging the environment. They demand action against those responsible, alleging misuse of power. *—PTI*

With metro, Devanahalli will soon become an IT hub: CM

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

The State, led by its capital, powers a significant share of India's electronics and R&D exports, as well as global capability centres and unicorn tally, with dynamic synergy of industry, academia, and policies making it the epicentre of the nation's innovation revolution, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the inauguration of SAP Labs India's new campus at Devanahalli, he said the new campus is a testament to the State's strengths, tech-savvy talent, world-class infrastructure, and progressive policies that make it a "magnet for global innovation".

"This new campus, designed to eventually house 15,000 professionals, will strengthen our position as India's innovation workforce engine. It marks a significant milestone in our mission to create high-value jobs and opportunities for our youth," the CM said.

"We contribute over 8 per cent to India's GDP and lead the nation in IT exports with a 35 per cent share," he shared. The City is home to over 40 per cent of the nation's unicorns, he said. *— PTI*

Oppn will expose Cong's misrule in Assembly: Ashoka

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

The Opposition will corner the Congress government for its "misrule", botched handling of the RCB victory celebrations leading to a stampede, lack of funds for development and many other issues in the Assembly, Leader of Opposition R Ashoka said on Tuesday.

The nine-day monsoon session of the Assembly will begin on 11 August.

The BJP leader said an NDA meeting consisting of senior BJP and JD(S) leaders and legislators will be held a day before to finalise the strategy.

"We held a meeting today (Tuesday) to discuss the plan of action during the Assembly's monsoon session. Another meeting will be held on 10 August to discuss the issues to be raised during the session, such as the Congress government's maladministration, the State's coffers being empty, its inability to pay salaries to State government employees and the transport employees going on a strike," Ashoka said.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting of BJP legislators, he pointed out that almost all Congress MLAs are openly speaking to the media about the lack of development projects. Siddaramaiah is not releasing money for developmental works, as the government has become "bankrupt", he said. *—PTI*

Cubbon Park walkers slam Zomato event

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

The Cubbon Park Walkers Association condemned Zomato's dating event at the park to be held on 9 August.

The group said that by selling tickets priced at Rs 199, on Book District app, Zomato was undermining the park's sanctity as a nature reserve.

"As guardians of Cubbon Park for the past 15 years, we assert that this green space should remain an exclusive domain for nature lovers, free from commercial exploitation," said S Umesh, the association's. "We urge the Horticulture Department to file a police complaint against this event." The Association urged event organisers to consult with it to ensure future activities would help preserve the park. *—Salar News*

AFTER 18 MONTHS

Ashram, Google help reunite woman with kin

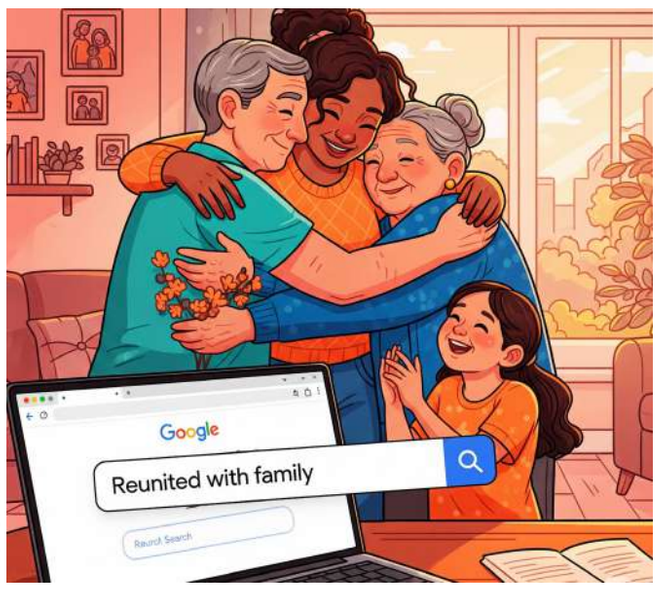


PHOTO: GEMINI AI

THANE/KARWAR 5 AUG

A mentally ill woman, hailing from State and missing for the last one-and-a-half years, has been reunited with her family with the help of Google Search and efforts by a social organisation in Maharashtra, its representatives said on Tuesday.

The woman, a post-graduate from Karwar, was found in a poor state at a locality under Verna police station limits in neighbouring South Goa district on 5 February, 2024.

She was subsequently brought to the Savita Ashram, run by the Jeevan Anand Sanstha, at Pandur village in Kudal taluka of Sindhudurg district in Maharashtra, the organisation said in a release.

At the ashram, she received medical treatment, counselling and emotional support from a team of caregivers. Slowly, her mental health improved, and she began to recall fragments of her identity, including the name of her hometown, it said.

Ashram trustee Kisan Choure then turned to Google Search in an attempt to trace her roots. He managed to located the area where her family resided and contacted the Karwar City Police Station, informing them about her presence at the ashram, the release said. Her family had already filed a missing person report at the Karwar Women's Police Station.

On Monday, the woman's brother and sister-in-law, accompanied by an official from the Karwar Police Station, visited the ashram and formally took her custody, the release said. *—PTI*

TN CM lays foundation of Rs 17.65 cr projects

CHENNAI, 5 AUG

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin laid the foundation for 14 development projects worth Rs 17.65 crore and inaugurated several police and educational infrastructure in Kolathur. Highlights included the opening of the Deputy Commissioner of Police's office and a new police station at Kalaignar Centenary Bus Terminus in Kilambakkam, built at Rs 18.26 crore.

He also inaugurated additional school buildings at Chennai Girls' Higher Secondary School in Perambur, costing Rs 9.74 crore, along with a police station in Peravallur, other police facilities, and an air-conditioned bus stand at Retteri. Stalin expressed his feelings on X: "The Kolathur visit, which was postponed due to (my) health reasons, gave me the feeling of being separated for a long time....."—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

BJP's Suvendu Adhikari's convoy attacked in Bengal

COOCH BEHAR, 5 AUG

The convoy of Leader of Opposition in the West Bengal Assembly, Suvendu Adhikari, was allegedly attacked by TMC workers in Cooch Behar district during a protest. The TMC, however, dubbed the charges "well-scripted drama". Adhikari faced sloganeering and shown black flags. According to BJP leaders, a mob, holding TMC party's flags and black flags, gathered at the Khagrabari crossing around 12.35 pm, when Adhikari's convoy was passing through the area. At least one car in his convoy, including a police escort vehicle, had its window panes shattered. It is yet to be confirmed whether anyone was injured in the incident and cops are yet to release a statement.—*PTI*

Ministry yet to get Rohini Commission report

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Over two years after the Rohini Commission submitted its report on sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs), the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on Tuesday said it has not yet received the report. In response to a question in Lok Sabha, Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Dr. Virendra Kumar said that the Commission had submitted its final report to the President on 31 July, 2023. However, he noted, "The report has not been received in this department." Set up in October 2017, the Rohini Commission was tasked with examining the need for sub-categorisation within the nearly 2,600 OBC groups to ensure more equitable distribution of reservation benefits.—*PTI*

30 detained in NSUI protests over poll delay

JAIPUR, 5 AUG

NSUI workers and senior Congress leaders, including Sachin Pilot, staged a protest demanding the immediate resumption of student union elections. However, Police used water cannons to disperse protesters at Shaheed Smarak after they attempted to breach barricades en route to the CM's residence. Over 30 leaders and workers, including Ladnun MLA Mukesh Bhakar and NSUI President Vinod Jakhar, were detained. Pilot criticised the BJP-led government, accusing of dictatorial tactics inspired by Delhi, and urged for elections to be held. He also criticised stalled development and lack of opportunities for youth, calling for a "revolution of awareness." Pilot paid tribute to former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satyapal Malik, stating, "He fought for farmers."
—*PTI*

India, Philippines forge strategic partnership

India and Phillipines are friends by choice, says PM Modi

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

India and the Philippines are friends by choice and partners by destiny, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday as the two countries elevated their ties to the level of strategic partnership, with emphasis on increasing interaction among the armed forces.

The announcement was made after talks between Prime Minister Modi and visiting Philippines President Ferdinand R Marcos Jr here, and a day after the navies of the two countries conducted joint exercises off the Philippines coast.

"India and the Philippines are friends by choice..... it is a promise to the future," Modi said.

The two countries signed nine pacts, including on declaration and implementation of strategic partnership, terms of reference for talks among their armed forces and for cooperation on peaceful use of outer space.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Philippines President Ferdinand R Marcos Jr during a meeting in New Delhi PHOTO: PTI

Modi said the Philippines is an important partner in India's Act East Policy and 'MAHASAGAR' (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across Regions) vision.

India and the Philippines are celebrating 75 years of establishment of diplomatic relations and the two leaders released a postage stamp to commemorate the occasion.

Modi also thanked the Philippine government for condemning the Pahalgam terror attack and standing with India in its fight against terrorism.

India will increase the number of Quick Impact Projects in the Philippines and will also cooperate in the development of sovereign data cloud infrastructure.

Three ships of the Indian Navy were participating in a naval exercise in the Philippines for the first time.

The prime minister said the trade between the two countries crossed USD 3 billion.In the science and technology sectors, joint research is going on in areas from virology to artificial intelligence and additive manufacturing.—*PTI*

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh and Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge have a war of words PHOTO: PTI

Who is running the House?: Kharge to Deputy Chairman

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, on Tuesday attacked the Centre during the Monsoon Session of Parliament on whether the Upper House was being run by Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh or Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

His remark triggered a harsh response from the treasury benches and drew a rebuttal from Singh.

"..... disruptions are also a part of democracy.....who is running this House — you, or Amit Shah?" Kharge asked.

The Deputy Chairman termed the accusation wrong. The Opposition expressed concerns over the alleged deployment of security forces, including CISF personnel, inside the Rajya Sabha.

Kharge had written to him, claiming CISF personnel were made to "run into the well of the House" during Opposition's protests.

He emphasized that that such actions violated the very democratic nature of the Parliament.

Singh, denying the presence of CISF inside the House, said that only Marshals were allowed to enter.

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju accused Kharge of "misleading the people" and "presenting false facts" in the House.

The Monsoon Session, which began on 21 July 21, saw several disruptions, including the Opposition's protest against the special revision of electoral rolls in Bihar.

PARLIAMENT MONSOON SESSION

48 people on 'no-fly list'

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

As many as 48 air passengers were placed on the 'no-fly list' this year till 30 July. Unruly passengers can face flying ban for extended periods depending on the severity of their misconduct. Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol informed the Rajya Sabha that 48 people were placed on the 'no-fly list' till July, 2025. A total of 82 and 110 passengers were placed on the list in 2024 and 2023.—*PTI*

ST Reservation in Goa assembly

The Lok Sabha on Tuesday passed 'The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill, 2025' to provide reservation to Scheduled Tribes in the Goa assembly. —*PTI*

INDIA bloc parties back Rahul

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

INDIA bloc parties on Tuesday termed "unwarranted" the Supreme Court observations against Rahul Gandhi for his alleged remarks on the Army, and asserted it was the responsibility of political parties to comment on issues of national interest.

Floor leaders of INDIA bloc parties discussed the SC remarks against Rahul Gandhi at a meeting in New Delhi. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Gandhi were present at the meeting.

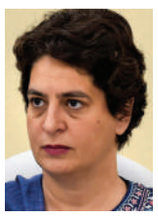
"All leaders of the India parties agreed that the sitting judge has made an extraordinary observation which is unwarranted on the democratic rights of political parties," the Congress said in a statement.

"It is the responsibility of political parties especially the Leader of Opposition to comment on issues of national interest," the statement said.

"When a government fails so spectacularly to defend our borders, it is every citizen's moral duty to hold it accountable," it further said.

Rahul Gandhi PHOTO: PTI

> It is not up to the judges to decide who is a "true" India
>
> -Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress MP



Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said, "With due respect to the honourable judges of the Supreme Court, they do not decide who is a true Indian. It is the job of the opposition leader, it is his (Rahul Gandhi's) duty to ask questions and to challenge the government."

"My brother would never say anything against the Army. He holds the Army in the highest respect. So it is a misinterpretation (of his remarks)," she said. —*PTI*

HC tells Suvendu to not slander TMC's Abhisekh

KOLKATA/LUCKNOW, 5 AUG

A court here has restrained till 19 August Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari from making any "defamatory statements" against Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee.

The order was issued in connection with a civil defamation suit filed by the TMC's Diamond Harbour MP. Banerjee alleged that Adhikari had made certain defamatory comments against him on 26 July. He prayed for an order of interim injunction restraining the Suvendu from making any defamatory statements against him. The matter will be heard on 19 August. —*PTI*

Profits of foreign firms fund terror: Yogi

Yogi Adityanath PHOTO: PTI

ALIGARH, 5 AUG

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday claimed that profits earned by foreign companies through sale of their goods in India are being used to fund terrorism, Naxalism, religious conversion and 'love jihad' in the country. He urged people to adopt Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'vocal for local' campaign to support indigenous products and artisans.

Adityanath said, "If our money goes to our artisans and craftsmen, it becomes the foundation for development and prosperity. But if our own money goes into foreign hands, that profit will be used against India – in the form of terrorism, religious conversion and explosions to destabilise the country. That is why swadeshi (indigenous goods) is the need of the hour."

> • Adityanath said, "If our money goes to our artisans and craftsmen, it becomes the foundation for development and prosperity. But if the money goes into foreign hands, that profit will be used against India.

PM Modi, in a speech in Varanasi on 2 August, called for greater emphasis on indigenous products, especially in light of heavy export tariffs being imposed on Indian goods by some countries, including the US.

Highlighting the success of the 'One District, One Product' (ODOP) initiative launched in 2018, the chief minister said the influx of Chinese goods during festivals has significantly reduced. —*PTI*

Mayawati denies alliance with BJP

LUCKNOW, 5 AUG

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Tuesday strongly denied any alliance or understanding with the BJP and urged party cadres to remain alert against such "misinformation".

The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said on X, "As is well known, the BSP is neither part of the BJP-led NDA alliance nor the Congress-led INDIA bloc, or any other front...."

Despite this, a "misinformation campaign" has been unleashed by "casteist mindsets targeting Dalits, tribals and OBCs" to politically harm the BSP.

She said reports of her alliance with the BJP are "false, baseless, and malicious". Urging party workers and supporters to remain alert, Mayawati said such "dirty tactics" are part of political conspiracies to weaken the Ambedkarite movement in the state. —*PTI*

NDA passes resolution praising PM Modi, armed forces for Op Sindoor

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was felicitated by the NDA parliamentary party on Tuesday for his government's firm response to the Pahalgam terror attack under Operation Sindoor.

Modi noted that 5 August was a historic day as Article 370, which gave special rights to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, was abrogated on this day.

A resolution was passed praising Modi's leadership and the armed forces' "unmatched courage and unwavering commitment" during Operation Sindoor and Operation Mahadev.Three senior Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commanders were killed in an encounter 'Operation Mahadev' in Srinagar. —*PTI*

Army shares clip of US role in arming Pakistan

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

In the backdrop of mounting US criticism of India's purchase of crude oil from Russia, the Indian Army on Tuesday posted a news clip of August 1971 which highlighted the role played by the US in arming Pakistan "since 1954". The Eastern Command shared the news clip on X.

25 AUG 1971

U.S. Arms Worth $2 Billion Shipped To Pakistan Since '54

The news clip dating back to 1971, which was shared by Army PHOTO: X

"US Arms Worth $2 Billion Shipped to Pakistan Since '54," the headline said.

The news, published few months before the Indo-Pak War of 1971 that led to creation of Bangladesh, talks about the role US had played in arming Pakistan the preceding nearly two decades.

The report quotes VC Shukla, then minister for defence production, who had told the Rajya Sabha about the estimated valuation of the arms supplied for that period. The post comes amid mounting criticism by Washington on New Delhi's purchase of crude oil from Russia.

India mounted a sharp counterattack on the US and the European Union for their "unjustified and unreasonable" targeting of New Delhi for its procurement of Russian crude oil. —*PTI*

BIDDING A TEARFUL ADIEU

Shibu Soren's mortal remains laid to rest at ancestral village

RANCHI, 5 AUG

The mortal remains of veteran tribal leader and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) co-founder Shibu Soren, fondly known as 'Dishom Guru', were laid to rest with full state honours at his ancestral village Nemra in Ramgarh district on Tuesday.

Guruji, as he was popularly known, breathed his last at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi on 4 August. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid homage to the departed soul there.

Soren, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha co-founder, died of kidney-related ailments at the age of 81.

Special traffic arrangements were made for the funeral as several political leaders, including Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and others participated.

> • Guruji, as he was popularly known, breathed his last at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi on 4 August. President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid homage him

Meanwhile, a pall of gloom has descended on Nemra village in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district after Guruji's demise.

The mortal remains of Soren were brought to the Jharkhand Assembly for legislators and officials to pay their last respects.

The Jharkhand government declared a three-day state mourning till 6 August, with most schools remaining closed.

Rajya Sabha proceedings were also adjourned for the day on 4 August.

Shibu Soren's mortal remains were flown to Ranchi in a special aircraft from Delhi. A flower-decked open carriage carried the mortal remains from the airport to Soren's Morabadi residence in Ranchi. Chief Minister Hemant Soren, his legislator wife Kalpana, and MLA brother Basant also returned to Jharkhand.

Hoardings, banners and posters with a message 'Antim Johar' (last salutation) were put up in Ranchi to pay tributes to the former Chief Minister. —*PTI*

Villagers attend the last rites of former Jharkhand chief minister Shibu Soren, at Nemra village in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district on Tuesday PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: X

Malayalam actor Shanawas Nazir passes away

T'PURAM, 5 AUG

Noted Malayalam film and TV actor Shanawas died at a private hospital here following some prolonged health issues late Monday night, family sources said. He was 71. Son of evergreen actor Prem Nazir, Shanawas had been suffering from age-related ailments for a while, and he was shifted to the hospital after his condition turned worse, they said. Beginning his acting career with Balachandra Menon's Premageethangal, Shanawas acted in over 50 Malayalam films and a few television serials. He was last seen in Prithviraj's 2022 blockbuster movie Janaganamana. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, General Education Minister V Sivankutty, Opposition Leader VD Satheesan, and senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala, among others, condole Shanawas's demise. *—PTI*

R'than guest house manager 'spies' for Pakistan; held

JAIPUR, 5 AUG

Manager of a Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) guest house was detained in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, on suspicion of spying for Pakistan, police said Tuesday. Mahendra Prasad, a resident of Uttarakhand's Almora, was posted as the manager of the DRDO guest house in Chandan area. "He was detained on Monday. A joint interrogation will be conducted today," Superintendent of Police, Jaisalmer, Abhishek Shivhare said. "He is suspected to have provided sensitive information related to strategic operations and activities in the region," police said. DRDO conducts tests and trials of missiles and weapons in Pokaran firing range in Jaisalmer, and experts and officials involved stay in the guest house. *—PTI*

4-yr-old sexually assaulted in Thane school; hunt on

THANE, 5 AUG

Parents of a four-year-old girl student of a reputed school in Maharashtra's Thane city have alleged that an unidentified person sexually assaulted her, prompting police to launch an investigation, officials said. The parents have alleged in their complaint that a person in blue clothes sexually assaulted their daughter in the school premises on 30 July, from 11.15 am to 3 pm, the officials said on Monday. Taking serious note of the matter, the police examined the CCTV footage of the school as part of their probe. The school administration was cooperating with the police in the case, cops said. *—PTI*

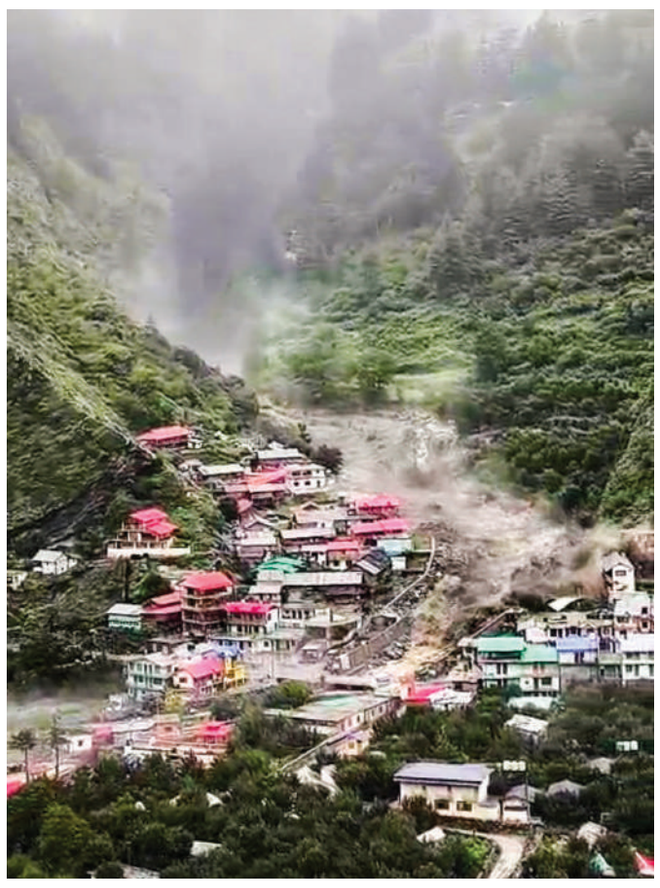
Denied cellphone, M'rashtra teen jumps to death

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 5 AUG

A 16-year-old boy, preparing for a police recruitment exam, took his own life in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar after his parents allegedly refused to buy him a mobile phone. Atharva Tayade was seen lying unconscious on a rocky hill in Sajapur on Sunday by two passers-by, who rushed him to hospital. Doctors declared his death after examining him in the hospital. Tayade's suicide was motivated by his family's refusal to purchase a phone. The deceased, originally from Jalgaon Jamod in Buldhana district, lived in Sajapur. An accidental death report has been filed, and authorities are continuing their inquiries. *—PTI*

Cloudburst: Explainer on the extreme weather event

Himalayas are most vulnerable & climate change worsens it



Houses being swept away as a flash flood rages through a settlement at Dharali in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand on Tuesday *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

- Researchers call for concrete policies, planning and management of cloudburst events by national and global organisations.

A cloudburst in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district has caused flash floods, wreaking havoc in high-altitude villages of Dharali. Here's an explainer on what a cloudburst is.

Counted among the most devastating natural disasters in the Indian Himalayas, a cloudburst causes an enormous amount of rainfall across a limited area within a short span of time.

According to the India Meteorological Department, rain falling at a rate of over 100 millimetres an hour with strong winds and lightning across 20-30 square kilometres of area is termed a cloudburst.

However, in a 2023 paper, researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology, Jammu, and National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee, define cloudburst as a "sudden downpour of rainfall in a range of 100-250 millimetres an hour covering a smaller spatial extent similar to one square kilometre".

The Indian Himalayas are considered vulnerable to unusual and extreme weather events, including cloudbursts, extreme precipitation, flash floods, and avalanches, the risk of all of which is said to increase as climate change intensifies.

Extreme rainfall events in the region, including districts in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, have been studied to commonly occur during the monsoon season.

Occurrence of extreme weather events is frequent for locations at elevation 1,000-2,000 metres, "which are densely populated valley folds of the Himalayas," the 2023 paper says. Uttarkashi is located at about 1,160 metres above sea level.

Further, cloudburst events per unit area are "very high in Uttarakhand", compared to other regions in the Indian Himalayas, with recent events being more severe, it says.

On 26 July, heavy rains lashed Uttarakhand's Rudraprayag district, causing boulders to slide down Kedarnath route.

A sudden cloudburst on 29 June at Silai Band on Barkot-Yamunotri Marg in Uttarakhand left eight to nine workers missing. *—PTI*

Parliament extends President's Rule in Manipur by six months

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

PHOTO: ANI

- As Opposition MPs continued their protests in the Parliament on Tuesday, Deputy Chairman Harivansh said it was a "constitutional obligation" to pass the resolution

Parliament on Tuesday approved a statutory resolution to extend President's Rule in Manipur for another six months beyond 13 August.

The resolution, which was passed by the Lok Sabha last week, was approved by the Rajya Sabha, amid uproar by Opposition members over electoral rolls revision in Bihar. As Opposition MPs continued their protests, Deputy Chairman Harivansh said it was a "constitutional obligation" to pass the resolution.

BJD MP Muzibulla Khan said, "When Manipur law and order situation was bad, Article 356 was imposed. Today, the situation of law and order in Odisha is bad..."

"Has the situation improved after so many months of President's Rule or not? Minister should inform us... The Centre should take responsibility, removing an elected government and imposing President's Rule repeatedly is also not good," he said.

Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said, "A rift was created between two communities in Manipur due to an order of the High Court related to a dispute on reservations. Those who say it is religious violence are wrong..." Manipur was put under President's Rule in February after Chief Minister N Biren Singh stepped down, two years after the ethnic conflict began between the valley-based Meiteis and hills-based Kuki-Zo group. *—PTI*

Odisha women must sign to work in night shifts

BHUBANESWAR, 5 AUG

The Odisha government has allowed women to work in night shifts in commercial establishments, but a written consent would be mandatory. The Labour and Employees' State Insurance Department issued a detailed guideline in this regard.

At least three women employees should be there on the night shift, and adequate transportation facilities with a GPS-tracking system to pick up and drop them should be arranged. No adolescent women will be allowed to work, whether as an employee or otherwise, in any establishment during the night, it said.

"The employer shall provide washroom and drinking water facilities," it added. *—PTI*

Jobless techie steals from Pune bank manager's home

PUNE, 5 AUG

An indebted and jobless IT professional allegedly entered a bank manager's house at a housing society in Pimple Gurav here posing as a courier delivery agent and tried to rob his son at gunpoint.

The accused, however was overpowered by the bank manager's brother and handed over to the police last week.

Desperation drove the 40-year-old man seemed to commit the crime as he was jobless and unable to pay the EMIs for two flats owned by him.

A licensed gun, 19 live rounds, and a kukri (a sharp weapon) were recovered from his possession.

The accused, identified as Sangboi Kom Serto, was a native of Manipur and lived with his family in the NIBM area of Pune.

Serto worked as a business analyst in a private firm until he lost his job in 2024. He hatched a plan to rob him of Rs 8 to 10 lakh. On the day of the incident he forced his way inside and pointed a gun at his chest and demanded cash and valuables. *—PTI*

DERA SACHA SAUDA CHIEF GETS 40-DAY PAROLE

CHANDIGARH, 5 AUG

Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, leader of Dera Sacha Sauda and serving a 20-year sentence for raping two disciples, has been granted a 40-day parole and released from Sunaria prison in Rohtak, Haryana. The 58-year-old will stay at his Sirsa-based Dera, where he urged followers via video to avoid gatherings and heed sect elders. Convicted in 2017 for sexual assault and in 2019 for the murder of journalist Ranjit Singh, Singh has been out of prison 13 times since his sentencing, mostly at the Dera in Uttar Pradesh. Sikh organisations, including the SGPC, criticised the release. SGPC president Harjinder Singh Dhami said, "The government is releasing the Dera chief on parole while 'Bandi Singhs' remain in jail." Dera spokesperson Jitender Khurana defended the decision, stating it was lawful. *—PTI*

2 dead, 3 injured in scuffle at MP temple

SEHORE, 5 AUG

Two persons were killed and three others sustained injuries after a scuffle broke out as crowds surged at Kubreshwar Dham in Madhya Pradesh's Sehore district on Tuesday, police said.

Kubreshwar Dham is associated with religious preacher Pandit Pradip Mishra.

According to eyewitnesses, the Kanwar Yatra is scheduled on Wednesday, for which devotees had arrived in large numbers. The incident occurred around 12 noon when a large number of devotees gathered for the Kanwar Yatra, an official said.

A scuffle broke out because of overcrowding, killing two persons and injuring three others, they said. Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Sunita Rawat confirmed the deaths of two persons and said that efforts are on to identify them. *—PTI*

PAVING NEW PATH

Kerala to scrap classroom 'backbenches'

T'PURAM, 5 AUG

Education Minister V Sivankutty said the government will appoint an expert panel to select the best seating pattern *PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE PIC*

Backbenchers in Kerala's state-run schools will soon be a thing of the past, as the state moves to abolish conventional row-wise seating, citing its adverse effects on students.

General Education Minister V Sivankutty said on Tuesday that the government would like to do away with the concept of 'backbenchers' from the school classrooms.

He said on Facebook thatthe general education department has decided to appoint an expert panel to find out the best seating pattern suitable for our education system.

"It has been decided to appoint a committee of experts to find out the best model suitable for our education system. Let us consider the suggestions of this panel and move forward," the minister posted.

Stating that the concept of backbenchers can have a negative impact on a student's confidence and learning, Sivankutty said no child should be left behind in their studies or in life.

"Our goal is to ensure equal opportunities for all children. We are thinking about how to make this happen," he explained.

Many countries are following different models to eliminate the concept of backbenchers, the minister said, and sought the support of everyone in ensuring a better future for the children.

The elimination of the backbenchers' concept has been a topic of discussion in Kerala for some time, based on an idea shared by a recently released Malayalam film "Sthanarthi Sreekuttan".

Drawing inspiration from the movie, some schools have already implemented a U-shaped seating pattern, ensuring every student gets equal attention and prominence. *—PTI*

Cab using navigation app falls into canal near flooded road

Police said the road was waterlogged due to heavy rains and it would be difficult for a newcomer to find the canal *PHOTO: PTI*

KOCHI, 5 AUG

A private taxi fell into an open canal along a rainwater flooded road near Petta here on Tuesday morning while the driver was on his way, using a navigation tool, to pick up a passenger, police said. The vehicle fell into the canal and was three-fourths submerged in the water, according to visuals on TV channels.

The driver managed to get out unhurt, police said. The incident occurred around 7.30 am, police said. They said that the road was completely waterlogged due to heavy rains since late Monday night and it would be difficult for a newcomer to ascertain where the canal was located. Locals of the area who helped in pulling out the car told TV channels that the canal along the road was uncovered and during heavy rains the area becomes completely waterlogged. *—PTI*

Pollution boards can impose fines, rules apex court

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The Supreme Court has upheld the powers of the pollution control boards to impose restitutionary and compensatory damages for environmental harm, saying that prevention and remediation must be at the heart of environmental governance.

A bench held that under provisions of the Water Act and the Air Act, pollution control boards are constitutionally and statutorily empowered to levy damages for actual or potential environmental harm.

The verdict said these powers are incidental and ancillary to the empowerment. Such damages differ from criminal penalties, as they are civil in nature and intended to restore or prevent environmental degradation rather than punish violators.

The top court set aside a 2012 Delhi High Court decision that had curtailed the powers of pollution control boards to demand environmental damages.

The verdict reinforced the "polluter pays" and precautionary principles as central tenets of environmental law. It said if directions are issued as restitutionary and compensatory measures then these are not to be considered as punitive in nature.

It said Indian environmental law has assimilated the principle of Polluter Pays and there is also a statutory incorporation of this principle in our laws.

To ensure fairness and transparency in imposing restitutionary and compensatory environmental damages, necessary subordinate legislation in the form of rules and regulations must be notified, it said. *—PTI*

UP: Temple law for good admin

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The Uttar Pradesh government told the Supreme Court that its 2025 ordinance concerning the Banke Bihari Temple aimed solely at improving administration, not ownership.

The top court had paused its earlier approval of the temple corridor scheme, citing lack of stakeholder input. It criticised the state's "clandestine" move and proposed appointing a retired judge to oversee temple affairs. *—PTI*

Wadhawan's bail cancelled

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The Supreme Court on Tuesday cancelled the bail granted to former DHFL promoter Dheeraj Wadhawan in the Rs 42,871 crore bank fraud case.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and Satish Chandra Sharma, after reviewing a medical board's report, directed Wadhawan to surrender within two weeks. The Delhi High Court had granted him bail on medical grounds in September 2024. *—PTI*

SC to hear plea on J&K statehood

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The Supreme Court is set to hear on 8 August a plea seeking directions to the Centre for restoring statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. Filed by academic Zahoor Ahmad Bhat and activist Khurshaid Ahmad Malik, the petition highlights the impact of prolonged Union Territory status on democracy and federalism. *—PTI*

6TH ANNIVERSARY OF ABROGATION

Congress leader Tariq Hameed Karra raises slogans during a protest on the sixth anniversary of the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A of the Constitution, in Srinagar. Karra said, on 5 August, the identity of the 1.40 crore people of J&K, was stripped and J&K was not only bifurcated, but degraded as well. This is a day of mourning for the people of J&K and the Congress is observing it as a black day in all the 20 districts of J&K
PHOTO: PTI

Climate poses a threat to South Asian infra

Nepal floods are the latest in a series of disasters in South Asia during this year's monsoon season ***PHOTO: ANI***

Floods that damaged hydropower dams in Nepal and destroyed the main bridge connecting the country to China show the vulnerability of infrastructure and need for smart rebuilding in a region bearing the brunt of a warming planet, experts say.

The flooding of the Bhotekoshi River on 8 July, also killed nine people and damaged an inland container depot that was being built to support increasing trade between the two countries. The 10 damaged hydropower facilities, including three under construction, have a combined capacity that could power 6,00,000 South Asian homes.

Another smaller flood in the area on 30 July, damaged roads and structures, but caused less overall destruction.

Nepal's location in the Himalayan mountains makes it especially vulnerable to heavy rains, floods and landslides because the area is warming up faster than the rest of the world due to human-caused climate change. Climate experts say the increasing frequency of extreme weather has changed the playbook for assessing infrastructure risks while also increasing the need for smart rebuilding plans.

"The statistics of the past no longer apply for the future," said John Pomeroy, a hydrologist at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada. "The risk that goes into building a bridge or other infrastructure is generally based on historical observations of past risk, but this is no longer useful because future risk is different and often much higher."

While damage estimates from the July floods in the Rasuwa region are still being calculated, past construction costs give a sense of the financial toll. The Sino-Nepal Friendship Bridge alone, for example, took USD 68 million to rebuild after it was destroyed by a 2015 earthquake that ravaged Nepal.

The latest disaster has also stoked fears of long-lasting economic damage in a region north of the capital city Kathmandu that spent years rebuilding after the 2015 quake. Nepali government officials estimate that USD 724 million worth of trade with China is conducted over the bridge each year, and that has come to a standstill.

Disasters show need for climate-resilient infra

The Nepal floods are the latest in a series of disasters in South Asia during this year's monsoon season. Research has shown that extreme weather has become more frequent in the region, including heat waves, heavy rains and melting glaciers.

Climate experts said smart planning and rebuilding in climate-vulnerable regions must include accounting for multiple risks, installing early-warning systems, preparing local communities for disasters and, when needed, relocating infrastructure.

"What we have to avoid is the insanity of rebuilding after a natural disaster in the same place where it occurred and where we know it will occur again at even higher probability," said Pomeroy, the Canadian hydrologist. "That is a very poor decision. Unfortunately, that is what most countries do."

Before rebuilding in Rasuwa, Nepal government officials need to assess overall risks, including those due to extreme weather and climate change, said Bipin Dulal, an analyst at Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development.

The bridge connecting the two countries was rebuilt to better withstand earthquakes after it was destroyed in 2015, but it appears that officials did not properly account for the risk of flooding as intense as what occurred in early July, Dulal said.

Dulal said that large building projects in South Asia typically undertake environmental impact assessments that do not adequately factor in the risks of floods and other disasters. The centre is developing a multi-hazard risk assessment framework that it hopes will be adopted by planners and builders in the region to better account for the dangers of extreme weather.

Resilient structures can save billions in long run

In 2024 alone, there were 167 disasters in Asia -- including storms, floods, heat waves and earthquakes -- which was the most of any continent, according to the Emergency Events Database maintained by the University of Louvain, Belgium. These led to losses of over USD 32 billion, the researchers found.

"These disasters are all wake-up calls. These risks are real," said Ramesh Subramaniam, global director of programmes and strategy at the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

A CDRI analysis found that USD 124 billion worth of Nepal's infrastructure is vulnerable to the impacts of climate-driven disasters.

Global efforts to prepare for and deal with such losses include a climate loss and damage fund set up by the United Nations in 2023.

The fund currently has USD 348 million available, which the UN warns is only a fraction of the yearly need for economic damage related to human-caused climate change. The World Bank and Asian Development Bank have also provided loans or grants to build climate-resilient projects.

In Nepal's recently flood-ravaged region, Tsering, the local government official, said the repeated disasters have taken more than a financial toll on residents. *—PTI*

LETTERS

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SALAR سالار

Trump doesn't trust jobs data, but economists do

US President Donald Trump ***PHOTO: PTI***

The monthly jobs report is already closely-watched on Wall Street and in Washington but has taken on a new importance after President Donald Trump on Friday fired the official who oversees it.

Trump claimed that June's employment figures were "RIGGED" to make him and other Republicans "look bad". Yet he provided no evidence and even the official Trump had appointed in his first term to oversee the report, William Beach, condemned the firing of Erika McEntarfer, the director of the Bureau of Labour Statistics appointed by former president Joe Biden. The firing followed Friday's jobs report that showed hiring was weak in July and had come to nearly a standstill in May and June, right after Trump rolled out sweeping tariffs.

Economists and Wall Street investors have long considered the job figures reliable, with share prices and bond yields often reacting sharply when they are released. Yet Friday's revisions were the largest, outside of a recession, in five decades. And the surveys used to compile the report are facing challenges from declining response rates, particularly since Covid, as fewer companies complete the surveys.

Many academics, statisticians and economists have warned that declining budgets were straining the government's ability to gather economic data. There were government commissions studying ways to improve survey response rates, but the Trump administration disbanded them this year.

Heather Boushey, a top economic adviser in the Biden White House, noted that without Trump's firing of McEntarfer, there would be more focus on last week's data, which points to a slowing economy.

Here are some things to know about the jobs report: Economists and Wall Street trust the data

Most economists say that the Bureau of Labour Statistics is a nonpolitical agency staffed by people obsessed with getting the numbers right.

The only political appointee is the commissioner, who does not see the data until it is finalised, two days before it is issued to the public.

Erica Groshen, BLS commissioner from 2013 to 2017, said she suggested different language in the report to "liven it up", but was shot down.

The revised jobs data that has attracted Trump's ire is more in line with other figures than before the revision. For example, payroll processor ADP uses data from its millions of clients to calculate its own jobs report, and it showed a sharp hiring slowdown in May and June that is closer to the revised BLS data.

These are the figures Trump is attacking

Trump has focussed on the revisions to the May and June data, which on Friday were revised lower, with job gains in May reduced to 19,000 from 1,44,000, and for June to just 14,000 from 1,47,000. Every month's jobs data is revised in the following two months.

Trump also repeated a largely inaccurate attack from the campaign about an annual revision last August, which reduced total employment in the US by 8,18,000, or about 0.5 per cent. The government also revises employment figures every year.

Trump charged that the annual revision was released before the 2024 presidential election to "boost" then vice president Kamala Harris's "chances of victory", yet it was two months before the election and widely reported at the time that the revision lowered hiring during the Biden-Harris administration and pointed to a weaker economy.

Here's why the government revises the data

The monthly revisions occur because many companies that respond to the government's surveys send their data in late, or correct the figures.

Every year, the BLS does an additional revision based on actual job counts that are derived from state unemployment insurance records. Those figures cover 95 per cent of US businesses and are not derived from a survey but are not available in real time.

Figuring out how many new jobs have been added or lost each month is more complicated than it may sound. For example, if one person takes a second job, should you focus on the number of jobs, which has increased, or the number of employed people, which has not? (The government measures both: The unemployment rate is based on how many people either have or do not have jobs, while the number of jobs added or lost is counted separately).

Each month, the government surveys about 1,21,000 businesses and government agencies at over 6,30,000 locations.

Here's why the May and June revisions may have been so large

Ernie Tedeschi, an economic adviser to the Biden administration, points to the current dynamics of the labour market: Both hiring and firing have sharply declined, and fewer Americans are quitting their jobs to take other work. As a result, most of the job gains or losses each month are probably occurring at new companies, or those going out of business.

Other concerns about the government's data

Many economists and statisticians have sounded the alarm about things like declining response rates for years. A decade ago, about 60 per cent of companies surveyed by BLS responded. Now, only about 40 per cent do.

The decline has been an international phenomenon, particularly since Covid. The UK has even suspended publication of an official unemployment rate due to falling responses. *—PTI*

From loyalist to controversial critic: The political journey of Satyapal Malik

SATYAPAL MALIK
24 JULY, 1946 - 5 AUGUST, 2025

- Student leader to J&K Governor
- He started as a student leader, as President of Meerut College Students' Union, in mid 1960s
- In 1974, he was elected to the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly on Bharatiya Kranti Dal ticket
- He was nominated to Rajya sabha in 1980
- In 1984, he joined Indian National Congress
- In 2000s, he joined BJP and played a key role in making the 2014 elections manifesto
- He was made Bihar governor in 2017
- He was the last governor of J&K and it was under him that abrogation of Article 370 took place on 5 Aug, 2019.
- His relationship with BJP soured in 2020-21, when he flagged lapses that led to Pulwama attack in which 40 CRPF jawans were killed and claimed that the BJP govt at the Centre asked him to stay silent.

Veteran politician Satyapal Malik's five-decade-long political career spanned across multiple political parties and included several high-profile gubernatorial appointments before he transitioned into an outspoken critic of the very establishment he had served.

He served as the governor of four states -- Bihar (2017), Jammu and Kashmir (2018), Goa (2019), and Meghalaya (2020). But his most impactful assignment commenced in August 2018, when he was named the governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

The tenure saw two significant events -- the 2019 Pulwama attack in which 40 CRPF personnel lost their lives, and the 5 August, 2019 revocation of Article 370 and the division of the erstwhile state into two Union Territories—Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Malik was the last governor of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Malik, 79, who had been hospitalised for some time, passed away in a Delhi hospital on Tuesday, which marks the sixth anniversary of Article 370 revocation.

Though he rose to prominence as a loyalist in the BJP, his recent years have been characterised by his vociferous condemnation of the central government's policies, reworking his public image from that of a seasoned administrator to that of a vocal dissident.

From Jammu & Kashmir, he had been relocated to Goa, where his relationship with the state government soured as he was openly critical of its COVID-19 response and accused it of corruption.

His term in Goa came to an abrupt halt and he was posted to Meghalaya, his final assignment.

On retirement from governorship, he publicly confronted the central government over crucial matters, which included a contention that the Pulwama attack was an outcome of governmental indifference, and vocally backed the farmers' protests against the three central laws, contending that the government had not listened to them.

During his last days of life, Malik was also named in the CBI chargesheets filed in May this year in connection with the alleged corruption in the Rs 2,200 crore Kiru Hydro power project.

He strongly refuted the charges from his hospital bed, calling it "political vendetta".

Malik was born on 24 July, 1946, in the Baghpat district of Uttar Pradesh.

His political journey started as a student leader with socialist ideology but his career was later characterised by party hopping as he switched from the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD) to the Congress, then the Janata Dal and finally the BJP.

The Jat leader was first elected to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly in 1974 on Charan Singh's BKD party.

Malik was elected twice to the Rajya Sabha -- from 1980 to 1986 and then from 1986 to 1989 -- before he decided to contest the Lok Sabha elections on the Janata Dal ticket.

He won from the Aligarh parliamentary seat.

The then VP Singh government appointed him as the Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Tourism.

After the fall of the VP Singh government and the subsequent turmoil in the Janata Dal, Malik switched to the BJP, where he became a party vice-president and also acted as in-charge of its Kisan Morcha (farmers' cell). *—PTI*

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Putin's 'daughter' claims Kremlin destroyed her life

MOSCOW, 5 AUG

A woman widely believed to be Vladimir Putin's daughter has resurfaced on social media, accusing an unnamed man of "destroying" her life. In a Telegram post, 22-year-old Elizaveta Krivonogikh shared a photo of herself and wrote, "It's liberating to be able to show my face to the world again. It reminds me of who I was born to be and who destroyed my life. The man who took millions of lives and who destroyed mine". While she did not explicitly name Putin, German newspaper Bild, which accessed her Telegram channel 'Art of Luiza', suggested the context strongly implied the Russian President. Despite media scrutiny, the Kremlin denies any connection, with Putin's spokesperson stating in 2020 that the president had "never heard of her". *—Agencies*

32 bodies found in clandestine graves in central Mexico

MEXICO CITY, 5 AUG

Authorities in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato have discovered 32 bodies in clandestine graves in the municipality of Irapuato, nearly half of which have been identified. The state prosecutor's office announced on X on Monday that the graves were found on a property in the community of La Calera, on the city's north side, around 320 kilometres northwest of Mexico City. Forensic teams have been working at the site since 30 July and continue efforts to identify the remaining victims. The discovery comes less than two months after a mass shooting at a street party in Irapuato left 12 people dead. Guanajuato, plagued by violence, recorded over 1,500 homicides from January to July amid cartel conflicts. *—PTI*

Danish zoo seeks pets from people to feed predators

DENMARK, 5 AUG

Aalborg Zoo in Denmark has sparked debate with an unusual appeal, asking pet owners to donate healthy guinea pigs, rabbits, chickens, and horses to be fed to predators. The zoo explained on Facebook and Instagram that this mimics the natural food chain, helping predators like the Eurasian lynx, European lynx, and Sumatran tiger "hunt in the wild". "Chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs make up an important part of the diet of our predators," it said, adding that donated animals would be gently euthanised and used as food to promote natural behaviour and nutrition. The zoo stressed that nothing would go to waste. The appeal has received mixed reactions, with some criticising the idea of pets as prey, while others saw it as a humane solution for unwanted animals. *—PTI*

Applause acquires rights to 6 Jeffrey Archer novels

MUMBAI, 5 AUG

Applause Entertainment has secured exclusive screen rights to six of Jeffrey Archer's bestsellers, including 'The Clifton Chronicles', 'Fourth Estate' and 'The Eleventh Commandment'. These novels, which explore political drama, espionage, media struggles, and family sagas, provide a versatile story bank. The company plans to adapt them into premium series and films across various languages and platforms. Sameer Nair, MD of Applause, said, "This is a milestone for us... Archer's novels are compelling and character-rich, perfect for screen adaptation." Archer expressed enthusiasm, stating, "I have a deep fondness for India and am thrilled to see my stories come alive across the country and beyond." *—PTI*

Bibi orders full occupation of Gaza; govt frowns on it

Military fears danger to 20 hostages still with Hamas

TEL AVIV, 5 AUG

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has reportedly approved plans to fully occupy the Gaza Strip, according to Israeli media reports.

Netanyahu's decision will see the Israeli military expand its operations across the entire enclave, including areas where Hamas's captives are being held, i24NEWS, The Jerusalem Post, Channel 12 and Ynet reported.

Israeli military already occupies nearly 75 per cent of the Strip, and the move to occupy the remaining regions marks a major escalation to the nearly two-year war.

"The die is cast - we are going for a full occupation of the Gaza Strip...There will be operations even in areas where hostages are being held," said an anonymous source quoted by several news organisations. "If the Chief of Staff doesn't agree, he should resign".

25 People were killed by Israel in Gaza, while at least 8 others starved to death in the Strip

Palestinians struggle to get food and humanitarian aid from a truck in the southern Gaza Strip on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

The Jerusalem Post reported that the Prime Minister's Office directly told the Israeli Defence Forces Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir to follow through with the new directive — or resign.

The Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned the reports and called on the international community to "intervene urgently to prevent their implementation".

The plans have not gone down well with Netanyahu's government. The military believes that expanding the offensive will endanger the 20 hostages still alive in Hamas' control, according to a Reuters report. This comes as Netanyahu is set to meet his war cabinet on Tuesday to discuss the next steps for Israel's military in Gaza. *—Agencies*

China will decide on next Dalai Lama, says Tibetan official

BEIJING, 5 AUG

- The Dalai Lama said during his 90th birthday celebration last month that he would be reincarnated, and the authority to identify his reincarnation rests on a non-profit institution he has founded

An official of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) committee in Tibet on Tuesday said the next Dalai Lama will be chosen by the Chinese government, and not under the current Dalai Lama's directions, the Reuters reported.

The Dalai Lama said during his 90th birthday celebration last month that he would be reincarnated, and the authority to identify his reincarnation rests on a non-profit institution he has founded.

China treats the Dalai Lama as a separatist and wants to bring Tibetan Buddhism under its control, but the Nobel laureate and his huge following opposes it.

The CCP committee's Deputy Secretary, Gama Cedain, said the Dalai Lama's reincarnation would be found using a domestic search and approval by the Chinese government.

Speaking to reporters about the socioeconomic development in Tibet, Cedain said, "The central government has the indisputable final say in the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama." That was the creed devotees adhered to, and the government's process follows strict religious rituals and historical customs, he said, adding, "The reincarnation has never been decided by the Dalai Lama himself."

The Dalai Lama has, however, said his reincarnation will be born outside China and ruled out Beijing's role in choosing his successor. *—Agencies*

1ST ANNIVERSARY

Students use colored smokes as they commemorate the 'July Uprising Day', marking the anniversary of the fall of the Awami League government, in Dhaka on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Brazil's Bolsonaro under house arrest

SAO PAULO, 5 AUG

- Bolsonaro is an ally of US President Donald Trump, and Brazil is facing a trade war with the Trump administration

Brazil's Supreme Court on Monday ordered the house arrest for former President Jair Bolsonaro, who is on trial over a coup plot to remain in office despite defeat in the 2022 election.

Bolsonaro is an ally of US President Donald Trump and Brazil is facing a trade war with the Trump administration.

Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who oversees the case against Bolsonaro before the top court, said in his decision that the 70-year-old former president had violated precautionary measures imposed on him by spreading content through his three lawmaker sons.

Bolsonaro's lawyers said he will appeal the decision. They said his words "good afternoon, Copacabana, good afternoon my Brazil, a hug to everyone, this is for our freedom" – broadcast from a cell phone of one of his sons – cannot "be regarded as ignoring precautionary measures or as a criminal act".

In response, the US State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs criticised Justice Moraes, saying he uses Brazil's institutions to silence opposition and threaten democracy. "The US condemns Moraes ordering house arrest on Bolsonaro," it said. *—PTI & ANI*

Russia ends nuclear treaty with US

MOSCOW, 5 AUG

Russia has declared that it no longer considers itself bound by a self-imposed moratorium on the deployment of nuclear-capable intermediate range missiles,

It comes after US President Donald Trump ordered the repositioning of two American nuclear submarines closer to Russian shores.

"Russia does not consider itself anymore bound by self-restrictions on deploying intermediate- and shorter-range missiles (INF) as conditions to preserve this moratorium have disappeared," the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, signed between the USSR and the US in 1987, did not allow the deployment of missile launchers, ground-launched ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500km.

The US withdrew from the agreement in 2019.

The Russian Foreign Ministry said its repeated warnings on the matter have been ignored and the situation is moving toward the actual deployment of US-made intermediate- and shorter-range ground-based missiles in Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. It specifically cited US plans to deploy Typhoon and Dark Eagle missiles in Germany starting next year.

Because of this, "The Russian Federation does not consider itself anymore bound by relevant self-restrictions approved earlier".

Former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev – whose war of words with Trump prompted the US President to redeploy the American nuclear submarines – said that Moscow's move was a "result of the Nato countries' anti-Russian policy."

"This is a new reality all our opponents will have to reckon with," he wrote on X. "Expect further steps."

PHOTO: FREEPIK

RUSSIA DISMISSES US' NEOCOLONIALISM

Russia's Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova called the sanctions imposed by Washington on Russian oil buyers it a "neocolonial agenda".

When asked how Russia view Washington's policy of increasing tariff barriers against the key foreign policy partners in the Global South, such as China and India, Zakharova said, "Unable to accept the erosion of its dominance in an emerging multipolar international order, Washington continues to pursue a neocolonial agenda, employing politically motivated economic pressure against those who choose an independent course on the international stage". *—Agencies*

Russian nuke base mildly damaged in earthquakes

A nuclear submarine base in Russia's remote Far East region was reportedly damaged during one of the most powerful earthquakes in the area last week. Satellite images purported to show damage to a floating pier at the Rybachiy submarine base on the Kamchatka Peninsula. One section of the pier appears to have broken away from its anchor point. Apart from this, the images did not show any other major damage.

UK, NATO aim to sabotage 'shadow fleet': Russia

MOSCOW/BRUSSELS, 5 AUG

The UK's intelligence agencies are planning to enlist NATO allies in a large-scale operation targeting the Moscow's "shadow fleet", the press bureau of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) said, according to TASS.

As per the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this plan provides for a major act of sabotage to force the US into sanctioning buyers of Russian energy.

The Russian MFA said on X, "UK intelligence agencies plan to involve NATO allies to launch a massive raid on the 'shadow fleet'. This plan provides for a major act of sabotage to force Washington into sanctioning buyers of Russian energy. British secret services are planning ecological disaster in international waters".

According to the UK's plan, the impetus for such a campaign should be provided by "a resonant incident involving one or more tankers."

"The plan involves organising a major act of sabotage, the losses of which would allow the transportation of Russian oil to be declared a threat to all international shipping," the document said.

This comes as NATO began coordinating regular deliveries of weapons packages to Ukraine after the Netherlands offered military aid worth 500 million. *—ANI & PTI*

EYES ON CHINESE THREAT

Aus signs largest defence deal with Japan worth AUD 10B

SYDNEY/TOKYO, 5 AUG

Australia and Japan have signed the largest defence-industry agreement to date between both countries for the production of advanced warships for the Australian Navy, the country's Minister for Defence Richard Marles announced on Tuesday.

Under the deal, Australia will bolster its naval capabilities with 11 Mogami-class frigates, to be constructed by Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. According to the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the contract is valued at approximately 10 billion Australian dollars (around $6.5 billion USD).

Japan's landmark deal to construct warships for Australia is Tokyo's most consequential defence sale since ending a military export ban in 2014 as it steps away from post-war pacifism to counter China, according to reports.

Similarly, Australia is in the midst of a major military restructure, bolstering its navy with long-range firepower in an effort to deter China.

Under the deal, Australia will bolster its naval capabilities with 11 Mogami-class frigates, to be constructed by Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries **PHOTO: X@DEFENCEAUST**

Under the deal, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries will deliver three upgraded Mogami-class multi-role frigates to the Royal Australian Navy, first of which is to be built in Japan starting 2029. Other frigates will be built in Australia.

Though it is not clear yet how much it will cost taxpayers to build the rest of the warships in Australia, the government's decision is seen as a major victory for Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) and Japan, which has thrown substantial political resources into securing the bid.

Additionally, Australian Defence Minister Richard Marles said that frigates would eventually replace Australia's ANZAC-class ships, the oldest surface combatant fleet the Australian Navy has been operating since the end of World War II. *—Agencies*

Heat wave: Iran shuts offices to ease load on grid

TEHRAN, AUG 5

Authorities in Iran ordered government offices and banks across much of the country to close on Wednesday as surging summer temperatures and a worsening water crisis strain the power grid.

The state television announcement on Tuesday is the second this summer. As temperatures soared above 40 degrees Celsius, authorities urged residents to avoid outdoor activities and conserve water and energy.

Tehran and other cities already face two-hour electricity cuts every other day and experts warn cuts may increase to four hours. Protesters have gathered in front of Iran's national electric provider, Tavanir, demanding better grid management.

Years of US sanctions on Iran's oil and banking sectors, as well as difficulty in obtaining parts to operate and repair the electric grid, have made the country unable to maintain its energy infrastructure.

Southern Iran is bearing the brunt of the heat, with temperatures in Abadan exceeding 50 degrees Celsius on Sunday, ranking the city among the hottest places on Earth this summer. *—PTI*

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf members take out a protest march, demanding Khan's release, in Punjab province on Tuesday **PHOTO: X**

Over 500 supporters held in Punjab: Imran's party

LAHORE, 5 AUG

Imran Khan's party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), has claimed that over 500 of its supporters and leaders have been detained by police across Punjab, as protests erupted demanding Khan's release. The rally coincided with the second anniversary of Khan's incarceration, following his arrest in a corruption case on 5 August, 2023. He remains at Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi.

Most arrests occurred in Lahore, where supporters protested against the "fascist regime". Police, citing violations of Section 144 banning gatherings of four or more, detained numerous protesters. Social media videos showed police cracking down on supporters, including elderly individuals, sparking condemnation online.

Senior PTI leader Zulfi Bokhari criticised the government, stating, "Over 500 PTI leaders and workers have been arrested so far in Punjab, mostly from Lahore, including several lawmakers." He accused the government of eroding democracy and human rights.

Musarrat Jamshed Cheema condemned police raids on her residence, calling the actions "fascist". Former National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser said supporters would protest outside Adiala Jail, asserting Khan's willingness to stay in jail for "10 years for the people of Pakistan and the rule of law". *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Gold jumps by Rs 800 to Rs 98,820/10g

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Gold prices jumped by Rs 800 to Rs 98,820 per 10g in the national capital on Tuesday due to heavy buying by stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 98,020 per 10g in the previous market close. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity in the national capital appreciated by Rs 700 to Rs 98,500 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Tuesday. The precious metal had closed at Rs 97,800 per 10g on Monday. Meanwhile, spot gold fell by USD 20.95 or 0.62 per cent to USD 3,352.61 per ounce in New York. Spot silver was trading flat at USD 37.39 per ounce. *—PTI*

PHOTO: Pixabay

Rupee falls by 16P, closes at 87.82 against USD

MUMBAI, 5 AUG

The rupee depreciated 16 paise to close at 87.82 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, as risk-off sentiment deepened after US President Donald Trump renewed his threat to raise tariffs on Indian goods over New Delhi's continued purchases of Russian oil. Forex traders said the rupee is likely to slide further as India-US trade deal uncertainty continues to dent domestic market sentiments. Moreover, weak equity markets dented investors' sentiments further. However, the domestic unit pared initial losses on supposed intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 87.95 against the greenback, during the day it touched an intra-day high of 87.75 against the American currency. *—PTI*

'Tax arrears till 30 June stand at Rs 54.53L cr'

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary on Tuesday informed the Rajya that the total direct and indirect tax arrears as of 30 June stood at over Rs 54.53 lakh crore. "The total amount of tax arrears pending as on 30 June 2025, under indirect taxes is over Rs 7.01 lakh crore and under direct taxes is over Rs 47.52 lakh crore," he said. Of the total indirect tax arrears, over Rs 2.66 lakh crore pertain to those where pending taxes in individual cases is above Rs 10 crore as of June 2025. In case of direct taxes, tax arrears above Rs 10 crore as on June 2025 totalled about Rs 35.48 lakh crore. Further, of the Rs 7.01 lakh crore pending tax arrears under indirect tax, over Rs 3.71 lakh crore is pending due to litigation at various stages. *—PTI*

Zostel appoints Aviral Gupta as the new CEO

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Zostel on Tuesday announced a leadership reshuffle, with parent company Zo World appointing Aviral Gupta as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), succeeding Co-founder Dharamveer Singh Chouhan, who has assumed the role of Chairman. The hostel franchise chain stated the leadership shift reflects the formal beginning of Zo World's next chapter, an AI-powered, community-driven ecosystem that unites travel, hospitality, and digital experiences under one borderless brand. *—PTI*

Mkts close lower ahead of RBI policy decision

Sensex drops by 308.47 pts while Nifty falls by 73.20 pts

MUMBAI, 5 AUG

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower on Tuesday following selling in oil & gas and banking shares ahead of the Reserve Bank's monetary policy announcement on August 6.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 308.47 points or 0.38 per cent to close at 80,710.25. During the day, it declined 464.32 points or 0.57 per cent to hit an intraday low of 80,554.40.

The broader NSE Nifty fell 73.20 points or 0.30 per cent to close at 24,649.55. In the intraday session, it slipped by 132.45 points or 0.53 per cent to 24,590.30.

Among Sensex shares, Adani Ports, Reliance Industries, Infosys, ICICI Bank, Eternal, BEL, HDFC Bank, Power Grid, ITC and Sun Pharmaceutical were the major laggards.

However, Titan, Maruti, Trent, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finance, Tech Mahindra,

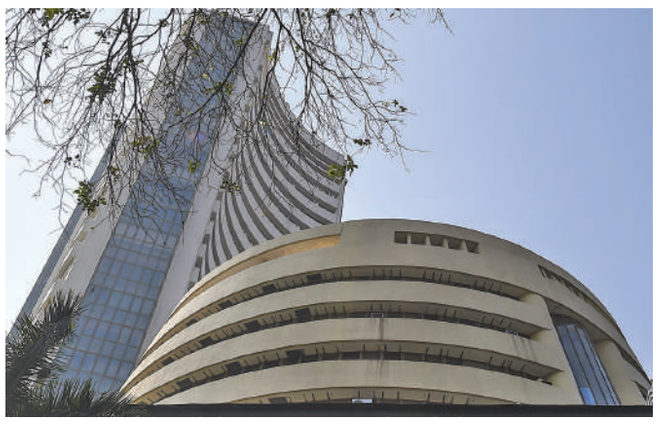


PHOTO: PTI

State Bank of India, L&T, HCL Technologies and NTPC were among the gainers. The BSE smallcap gauge went lower by 0.27 per cent and the midcap index by 0.14 per cent.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, Hong Kong's Hang Seng and Japan's Nikkei 225 index closed in the positive territory. European markets were trading in green. The US markets ended higher on Monday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.02 per cent to USD 68.06 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 2,566.51 crore while Domestic Institutional Investors purchased equities worth Rs 4,386.29 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

On Monday, the 30-share Sensex gained 418.81 points to settle at 81,018.72, and the NSE Nifty jumped by 157.40 points to close at 24,722.75. *—PTI*

Changes market saw overnight

- Asian markets in an overnight rally with Wall Street, traded higher
- Gift Nifty trading reached around 24,740 level
- Wall Street ended higher, hitting biggest daily per cent since 27 May
- old prices increased
- Crude oil prices eased

Services sector growth hits 11-month high

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The Indian services sector growth touched an 11-month high in July, supported by a pickup in new exports orders and sharp rise in overall sales, a monthly survey report said on Tuesday.

The HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index was at 60.5 in July, little-changed from 60.4 in June, and the rate of expansion was the best seen since August 2024. In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"At 60.5, the services PMI indicated a strong growth momentum, led by a pick-up in new export orders," said Pranjul Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC.

Sustained increases in new business intakes were the main aspect behind output growth, the report said, adding that Indian service providers also welcomed a stronger improvement in international demand for their services. "They reportedly secured new work from Asia, Canada, Europe, UAE and US," it said.

Going ahead, service providers were on average optimistic about their expectations for output in the year ahead. Among the factors supporting business confidence were efficiency gains, marketing, tech innovation and a growing online presence, they said.

PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

"The solid rise in output prices reflected greater cost burdens and demand strength," the survey said.

"On the price front, both input and output prices rose a tad faster than in June but this could change going forward as indicated by the recent CPI and WPI prints," Bhandari said.

The CPI-based retail inflation also rose to 2.1 per cent in June. *—PTI*

'Jane Street misused tax treaty'

HYDERABAD, 5 AUG

The Income Tax Department is investigating whether global proprietary trading firm Jane Street has breached India's Place of Effective Management (POEM) regulations. The firm has already been accused of not cooperating with authorities, according to reports citing sources familiar with the matter.

POEM is a tax framework designed to prevent offshore control of Indian entities.

Introduced in 2015, the POEM framework determines the actual location from where a company is managed and controlled. Under Indian tax laws, domestic companies are taxed at a rate of 25.17 per cent, whereas foreign companies or foreign-owned and controlled companies are subject to a higher tax of 35 per cent.

The probe comes in the wake of a recent Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) order, which determined that Jane Street's ultimate control lies in Europe & US. IT department is examining whether the firm's operations in India are effectively managed from abroad.

While the firm has contested SEBI's claim, they remained silent. Officials have been conducting searches at the firm's Indian offices for a week now. *—Agencies*

ED grills Anil Ambani for eight hours

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani on Tuesday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for questioning in a money laundering case linked to alleged multiple bank loan fraud cases worth crores of rupees against his group companies.

Ambani reached the ED office in Delhi around 10.50am and was questioned for eight hours. The statement of the 66-year-old is being recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), official sources said.

The summons come after the agency conducted searches at 35 premises of 50 companies and 25 people, in Mumbai, on 24 July.

Anil Ambani arrives at the ED office for questioning in a money laundering case, in New Delhi, on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

The ED has notified a Look Out Circular, as per standard operating procedure in large bank 'fraud' cases, against Ambani. *—PTI*

Ant Financial exits Paytm, sells 5.84% stake

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Chinese fintech giant Ant Financial, through its affiliate Antfin (Netherlands) Holding BV, has sold its entire 5.84 per cent stake in One97 Communications, the parent company of Paytm, for approximately Rs 3,803 crore. The sale involved up to 37.3 million shares at a floor price of Rs 1,020 each, a 5.4 per cent discount to Paytm's Monday closing price of Rs 1,078.20. Shares of One97 declined 1.45 per cent to Rs 1,062.60 on the NSE and 1.23 per cent to Rs 1,065 on the BSE following the announcement.

The transaction, entirely secondary, was conducted via share sales on NSE and BSE, with Goldman Sachs India Securities and Citigroup Global Markets India acting as placement agents. The deal is considered a clean-up trade with no lock-up clause. As of June 2025, Antfin held a 5.84 per cent stake, while Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma and his family own 19.31 per cent through Resilient Asset Management BV. Hong Kong's SAIF Partners held 15.34 per cent. *—PTI*

JioBlackRock launches NFO for 5 index funds

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

JioBlackRock Asset Management Pvt Ltd, a 50:50 joint venture between Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL) and US-based BlackRock, has announced the launch of its first suite of five index funds through a New Fund Offering (NFO).

The National Fund Offering will run from 5 August to 12 August, 2025, marking a key milestone in providing Indian investors with diversification, cost efficiency, transparency, and digitally enabled investment options.

The five funds include the Nifty 50 Index Fund, Nifty Next 50 Index Fund, and Nifty 8-13 Year G-Sec Index Fund. They aim to serve both first-time investors looking to build a balanced portfolio and experienced investors seeking to expand their holdings.

- The National Fund Offering will run from 5 August to 12 August, 2025

Earlier, the fund house mobilised Rs 17,800 crore from its maiden NFO, primarily raised from three cash and debt mutual schemes: JioBlackRock Overnight Fund, Liquid Fund, and Money Market Fund. *—PTI*

Adani Ports recently reported a 21 per cent year-on-year increase in quarterly revenue **PHOTO: PTI**

Adani quits key role at APSEZ

BENGALURU, 5 AUG

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) has announced that Gautam S Adani has stepped down from his role as Executive Chairman, effective today.

He will now serve as Non-Executive Chairman, and will no longer be classified as Key Managerial Personnel of the company, sources said. The board has also appointed Manish Kejriwal, Founder and Managing Partner of a private equity firm, as an Additional Non-Executive Director for a three-year term, it added.

Gautam Adani, Founder and Chairman of the Adani Group, has over three decades of business experience. Under his leadership, the Group has evolved into a major global infrastructure conglomerate with operations spanning resources, logistics, and energy sectors, said sources.

It added, Adani Ports recently reported a 21 per cent year-on-year increase in quarterly revenue, largely driven by doubling of growth in Logistics and nearly tripling in Marine operations, according to CEO Ashwani Gupta.

According to sources, the company has commenced operations at Colombo West International Terminal in Sri Lanka under a public-private partnership, targeting annual capacity of 3.2M TEUs. APSEZ is also in the process of acquiring NQXT Port in Australia, a deep-water export terminal with a nameplate capacity of 50M tonnes per annum. APSEZ now commands a 27.8 per cent share of India's total cargo market and 45.2 per cent of container market, it added.

Shares of Adani Ports were trading at Rs 1,381.90 on the BSE as of 13.52pm on Tuesday, said sources. *—Agencies*

Adani Ports, SEZ reports 6.54% rise in Q1 profit

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) posted a 6.54 per cent increase in net profit to Rs 3,310.60 crore for the June quarter, driven by higher income. Total income rose to Rs 9,422.18 crore, up from Rs 8,054.18 crore, while expenses increased to Rs 5,731.88 crore. CEO Ashwani Gupta highlighted a 21 per cent revenue growth, noting, "This quarter's momentum in logistics and marine businesses grew 2x and 2.9x respectively."

The company handled 121 MMT cargo, an 11 per cent rise, with all-India cargo market share increasing to 27.8 per cent . Haifa port reported 25 per cent YoY growth in container volume, and Krishnapatnam port's cargo hit a record 5.85 MMT in June. APSEZ's marine business grew 2.9 times YoY to Rs 541 crore. *—PTI*

Tata Capital files $2B draft IPO papers

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Non-banking financial company Tata Capital has filed updated draft papers for a mega initial public offering (IPO), with people familiar with the matter pegging the issue size at an estimated Rs 17,200 crore.

This would value the company around USD 11 billion, they added.

According to the updated draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) filed on Monday, the proposed IPO of 47.58 crore shares comprises a fresh issue of 21 crore equity shares and an offer for sale (OFS) of 26.58 crore shares.

Under the OFS component, Tata Sons will offload 23 crore shares, while the International Finance Corporation (IFC) will divest 3.58 crore shares.

Currently, Tata Sons holds an 88.6 per cent stake in Tata Capital, while IFC owns 1.8 per cent holding. Proceeds from IPO will be used to strengthen the company's Tier-1 capital base, supporting future capital requirements.

Tata Capital, had earlier filed draft papers in April through the confidential pre-filing route and secured approval from market regulator Sebi in July. *—PTI*

Highway Infra IPO fully subscribed

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The initial public offer of Highway Infrastructure Ltd got fully subscribed within hours of opening for bidding on Tuesday.

The three-day initial share sale received bids for 11,97,90,186 shares against 1,60,43,046 shares on offer, translating into 7.47 times subscription, according to data available with the NSE till 11.45am.

Retail Individual Investors part fetched 9.63 times subscription while the quota for non-institutional investors got subscribed 7.14 times. The Qualified Institutional Buyers portion received 90 per cent subscription.

Rs 130-crore IPO will conclude on Thursday.The price band has been fixed at Rs 65-70 per share *—PTI*

'TARGETS INDIA UNFAIRLY'

Trump not criticising largest Russian oil buyer China: GTRI

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

US President Donald Trump has been unfairly targeting India over Russian oil imports, while choosing not to criticize China, according to a recent report by the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI).

The report suggested that this selective approach may be driven by geopolitical calculations.

As per the data from the report, China is the largest buyer of Russian oil. In 2024, China imported USD 62.6 billion worth of Russian oil, compared to India's USD 52.7 billion. Despite this, Trump has focused his criticism on India, ignoring China's bigger role.

GTRI stated, "Trump appears unwilling to criticize China, perhaps because of geopolitical calculations, and instead targets India unfairly."

The report also rejects Trump's recent claim posted on Truth Social, where he alleged that India is "buying massive amounts of Russian oil and selling it on the open market for big profits."

GTRI clarified that this statement is factually incorrect and misleading. It explained that India does not export crude oil.

India is a net importer of crude oil, and its total crude oil exports stand at zero.

What India does export are refined petroleum products, including diesel and jet fuel, some of which are processed from Russian crude. *—ANI*

Sunjay Kapur died of natural causes: Coroner's report

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The death of industrialist **Sunjay Kapur** has been found to be due to natural causes as per the UK authorities, amid allegations of a foulplay by his mother Rani Kapur.

Kapur, the former Chairman of auto components major Sona BLW Precision Forgings, passed away due to left ventricular hypertrophy and ischemic heart disease, as per the coroner's report shared by office of his wife Priya Sachdev Kapur.

The findings come after Sunjay's mother Rani Kapur, demanded a full investigation into Sunjay's death. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Lukewarm outing for Indian women in Asian Surfing

CHENNAI, 5 AUG

Indian women surfers endured a tough outing in the first round of the Open category on the second day of the ASF Asian Surfing Championships here on Tuesday. National champion, Kamali Moorthy posted the highest score by an Indian on the day with a 7.60, followed by Sugar Shanti who scored 4.97 points. Third on the list of Indians was Shrishti Selvam with 4.60 points, as none of them were able to progress to the next round. However, the Indians can look forward to battle again in the repechage rounds on Wednesday. Japan's Anri Matsuno was star of the day, logging 15.34 pointsIn the Under-18 girls' section too, the Indians did not fare well as Saanvi Hegde (2.63 points) and Aadya Singh (1.40 points) bowed out. *—PTI*

India wins Racketlon World Challenger Cup

ROTTERDAM, 5 AUG

India, led by Vikramaditya Chaufla, won the Racketlon World Championship Challengers Cup in a thrilling final against Denmark in Rotterdam. The journey to the title was tough, with India defeating the USA in the quarter-finals and Germany in a tense semi-final, each match decided in the final moments. Chaufla's calm leadership, strategic clarity, and match temperament guided India through one of their most memorable racketlon campaigns. The former badminton player, already a Nations Cup gold medallist, secured his second world title with this victory. The winning team also included Prashant Sen, Nihit Singh, Suhail Kapur, Krishna Kotak, Nidhi Tiwari, and Raghav Jatia. Racketlon is a sport combining four disciplines: table tennis, badminton, tennis, and squash. This victory marks a significant achievement for Indian racket sports on the global stage. *—PTI*

Lyon completes the signing of Pavel Šulc

LYON, 5 AUG

Czech Republic international Pavel Šulc has completed a move to French club Lyon from Viktoria Plzen. Both clubs confirmed the transfer for a fee of 10 million euros ($11.6 million) on Monday. The offensive midfielder scored 15 goals and had nine assists last season for Viktoria in the Czech league, having netted 18 goals and added six assists the previous campaign. In July, he won the Czech Republic's Golden Ball award for the first time for being the best player of the 2024-25 season. The 24-year-old Šulc has played 14 international games for the Czech Republic, scoring four goals. *—PTI*

Hockey: 4 states register wins in Jr women nationals

KAKINADA, 5 AUG

Hockey Madhya Pradesh, Hockey Haryana, Hockey Jharkhand and Hockey Association of Odisha won their respective pool matches of the Junior Women's National Championship here on Tuesday. In the first Division 'A' match, Hockey Madhya Pradesh defeated Hockey Chandigarh 5-0. Krishna Sharma (36', 45') scored two goals whereas Kajal (29'), Aayushi Patel (50'), and Annu (58') netted one each. In the next match, Hockey Haryana defeated Hockey Bengal 7-1. While Hockey Jharkhand defeated Hockey Karnataka 2-0 in a closely contested penultimate match of the day, the final match saw Hockey Association of Odisha defeat Hockey Andhra Pradesh 3-1. In the Division 'B' games, Uttarakhand thrashed Puducherry 11-0 while Tamil Nadu and Delhi played out a 3-3 draw. *—PTI*

'Stars unlikely to pick & choose games'

BCCI officals say a more objective approach is expected in the near future

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Gautam Gambhir has always been against the mega-star culture prevailing in Indian cricket but Mohammed Siraj's Herculean effort throughout the English summer has definitely given the Indian head coach a real shot in the arm.

The creditable 2-2 series draw in England will certainly empower Gambhir and chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar to crack the whip and usher in a uniform team culture where certain individuals who would not be treated more than equals. It is understood that the selection committee, Gambhir and the decision makers in the Indian cricket board are all on the same page with regards to putting an end to players picking & choosing games and series in the pretext of workload management.

"There have been discussions and the message will be sent across to the centrally contracted players, especially those who are all format regulars that this culture of picking and choosing games won't be entertained in near future," a senior BCCI official told PTI.

"It doesn't mean that workload management will be thrown out of the window but a more objective approach is expected in near future. Obviously, fast bowlers' workload needs to be managed but it can't be accepted that in the name of workload management, people will miss crucial matches."

Siraj, who sent down 185.3 overs across five Tests, not to forget the hours of fielding and also overs bowled in the nets during the last six weeks is a shining example of what peak fitness looks like.

Performance of Siraj, Prasidh Krishna and Akash Deep has proved that even the biggest of stars are dispensable and no one is bigger than the team.

Even England skipper Ben Stokes despite multiple issues bowled marathon spells till the end of the fourth Test is raising debates whether the workload has become an "overrated concept" that is used for convenience. *—PTI*

Coach Gautam Gambhir, BCCI Chief selector Ajit Agarkar PHOTO: PTI

After muted celebrations, Indian players head home

LONDON, 5 AUG

India's dramatic series-levelling win at The Oval ended not with fanfare but quiet departures, as most players flew home early Tuesday.

Mohammed Siraj, the star of the victory, boarded an Emirates flight to Dubai, set to return to Hyderabad. Arshdeep Singh and Shardul Thakur were also among those heading back.

Some squad members, including Arshdeep and Prasidh Krishna, were seen spending time with family in central London shortly after the match. Kuldeep Yadav, who didn't play in the series, was spotted with former spinner Piyush Chawla. Jasprit Bumrah had already been released from the squad for workload management.

India's next major challenge is the Asia Cup, to be held in the UAE next month PHOTO: X/BCCI

"There were no celebrations it's been a long, hectic series," said a BCCI official. The draw marked a major milestone for Shubman Gill's young side following the retirements of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli. India's next major challenge is the Asia Cup, to be held in the UAE next month. *—PTI*

When I woke up this morning, I had a feeling inside that I can do it. I can change the game. Because I had so much belief, that's when I went to Google, took out a picture of 'believe', and put it on my wallpaper, that I can do it.

-Mohammed Siraj, Indian Cricketer

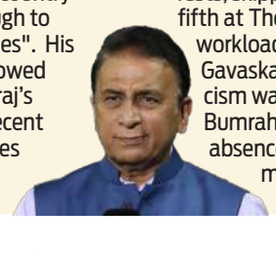
They just needed one partnership. They panicked in the way that they can with the way that they play, they play with a huge amount of aggressiveness.

-Michael Vaughan, Former captain

GAVASKAR CALLS FOR END OF WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT

LONDON, 5 AUG

Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar has criticised the idea of workload management, asserting that playing for the country should be enough to "forget the aches". His comments followed Mohammed Siraj's efforts in the recent five-match series against England, where he bowled 185.3 overs and took 23 wickets. Despite Siraj's dedication, pace bowler Jasprit Bumrah played only three Tests, skipping the crucial fifth at The Oval due to workload concerns.



Gavaskar clarified his criticism wasn't aimed at Bumrah, calling his absence "injury management". *—PTI*

BUMRAH'S PRESENCE HERE WOULD HAVE BEEN SPECIAL, SAYS SIRAJ

LONDON, 5 AUG

Mohammed Siraj expressed his admiration for Jasprit Bumrah, saying he missed the pace bowler's presence after India's narrow victory in the fifth Test against England at The Oval. Siraj took a five-wicket haul in the second innings, helping India win by six runs and level the series 2-2. His nine-wicket match haul earned him Man of the Match honours and praise from fans. "Every batsman, every bowler... hats off to him. I miss Jassi (Bumrah) bhai because if he had been there, it would have been special. I believe in Jassi bhai and myself," Siraj said emotionally in a BCCI video. Bumrah missed the final Test to manage workload and was released from the squad after the fourth game. *—PTI*

Erigaisi faces tough competition at Chennai Grandmasters

CHENNAI, 5 AUG

India's No. 1, Arjun Erigaisi, will face stiff competition at the expanded third edition of the Chennai Grandmasters chess tournament, starting Monday. The event, with a Rs 1 crore prize fund, will be played over nine rounds in a classical round-robin format across Masters and Challengers segments — a departure from the previous seven-round format.

The tournament features 19 Grandmasters vying for crucial FIDE Circuit points, which are vital for qualification to the 2026 Candidates Tournament. Erigaisi, who recently broke into the elite 2800 FIDE rating club, will be challenged by strong contenders including Nihal Sarin and Vincent Keymer of Germany, who was Gukesh's second during last year's World Championship. His main rival is Netherland's Anish Giri, renowned for his experience and solid style, making him a favourite.

Arjun Erigaisi PHOTO: X/ Arjun Erigaisi

India's Pranav V and Karthikeyan Murali are also capable of delivering stunning results. The event's expansion into a 20-player competition with two 10-player sections — Masters and Challengers — offers rising stars a clear pathway to top-tier chess. The Challengers winner will earn a spot in the 2026 Masters.

The Challengers segment also features notable players like D Harika, part of India's gold-winning women's team at last year's 45th Chess Olympiad, along with R Vaishali, Harshvardhan GB, and experienced Grandmaster Adhiban Baskaran, known for his aggressive style. The tournament promises exciting battles as new and seasoned players aim for glory. *—PTI*

Sundar named India's impact player in Eng draw

LONDON, 5 AUG

India clinched a dramatic six-run win at The Oval to level the inaugural Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy 2-2, defying expectations and silencing predictions that favoured England. The final day saw pacers Mohammed Siraj and Prasidh Krishna tear through England's lower order, with Siraj sealing victory by bowling Gus Atkinson.

However, it was Washington Sundar who was named India's Impact Player of the series for his invaluable all-round performances. Introduced from the second Test onwards, Sundar played all remaining matches and amassed 284 runs at an average of 47.33, including a vital century at Manchester and a quickfire 53 off 46 balls at The Oval. With the ball, he claimed seven wickets, including a standout 4/22 at Lord's, dismissing key players like Joe Root and Ben Stokes.

His century at Manchester, in a five-session rearguard alongside Ravindra Jadeja, ensured a hard-fought draw.

In a touching dressing room moment after the series, Jadeja awarded Sundar the Impact Player medal, saying, "Washi, come here, take it, son," before embracing him warmly.

Reflecting on the series, he said: "It's a blessing to play four games in England." *—ANI*

India's Sreesanth wins NESC Street Fighter 6 final

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

The National Esports Championships (NESC) 2025 concluded on 27 July with an electrifying Street Fighter 6 (Boys) final, where Mandalapu Sreesanth secured a commanding 3-0 win over Ansil Nalakath Abbas. With this victory, Sreesanth will lead India's challenge in Street Fighter 6 at the 3rd Asian Youth Games (AYG), set to take place in Bahrain from 22–31 October. Ansil has been named as official substitute.

Widely regarded as India's top under-18 Street Fighter 6 player, Sreesanth is a seasoned competitor with titles including the Versus Cup 2024 and Khelo India Youth Games. He credited his success to months of disciplined training and pledged to give his all to make the nation proud.

Ansil expressed gratitude to the Esports Federation of India (ESFI) and is determined to sharpen his skills ahead of the AYG.

ESFI Director Lokesh Suji praised both players, calling them a testament to India's rising esports talent. Qualifiers are set to follow later this month. *—ANI*

Barcelona opens disciplinary case against Stegen

MADRID, 5 AUG

Barcelona has initiated disciplinary proceedings against goalkeeper Marc-André ter Stegen, after he refused to sign a medical report regarding his recent back injury, a source familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. The individual, who requested anonymity, explained that the club needed Stegen's signature to submit the report to the Spanish league, which would help free up salary-cap space and facilitate the registration of other players.

The dispute centres on differing views about the recovery time following Stegen's surgery last week for recurring lower back issues. The goalkeeper previously stated that he expected a three-month recovery period, but Barcelona did not provide an official timetable, only confirming that the operation was "successful" and that "his recovery will determine when he can return." The league must review the report before approving the recovery timeline.

A key player and captain, Stegen has faced multiple injury setbacks, missing most of last season due to a knee tendon rupture, and missing around two months in 2023 following a back operation.

During his absence, goalkeepers Iñaki Peña and Wojciech Szczesny played in his stead.

Barcelona, the reigning Spanish champions, returned to Spain on Tuesday from a preseason tour in Asia.

It remains unclear what sanctions, if any, Stegen might face for refusing to sign the report, as negotiations are expected to take place in coming days. *—PTI*

UNCERTAINTY OVER ISL'S FUTURE

Bengaluru FC 'indefinitely' suspends salaries of players

NEW DELHI, 5 AUG

Indian Super League (ISL) outfit Bengaluru FC released a statement to confirm that they have suspended the salaries of players and staff members due to the "uncertainty" surrounding the future of the tournament.

The ISL, which is usually held from September to April, has been put on hold due to ongoing differences between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the board's partner, Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL). While taking the current situation into account, Bengaluru FC have "indefinitely" suspended the salaries.

The 2018-19 ISL title winners claimed that they were left with no choice but to take such an action due to the lack of clarity regarding India's football league's future.

"In view of the uncertainty surrounding the future of the Indian Super League season, Bengaluru Football Club has taken what is a very difficult decision of indefinitely suspending the salaries of players and staff belonging to the First Team. Running and sustaining a football club in India has always been an uphill climb, one that we have put everything aside and made, season after season," BFC said in a statement.

Amid the ongoing issue, AIFF on Monday announced that a meeting has been scheduled with CEOs from eight Indian Super League (ISL) clubs for Thursday in the national capital to discuss the matter with the nation's top-tier football tournament.

The current decision has resulted in the salaries of captain Sunil Chhetri, other players and staff members being suspended. However, the club confirmed that the youth teams will remain unaffected by this decision. *—ANI*

The ISL has been put on hold due to ongoing differences between the All India Football Federation and the board's partner, Football Sports Development Limited PHOTO: PTI